Daily Report

Latin America

FBIS-LAT-89-052
Monday
20 March 1989

Daily Report
Latin America

FBIS-LAT-89-052 *20 March 1989*

CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

SELA Recommends Caution on U.S. Brady Plan *[Hamburg DPA]* 1
Regional Countries Approve International Force *[Managua TV]* 1
River Plate Basin Group To Meet in Brasilia *[Madrid EFE]* 1

CARIBBEAN

Cuba

Study of New U.S. Plan on Foreign Debt *[Havana TV]* 2
Castro Attends Public Health Ministry Meeting *[Havana TV]* 5
Rodriguez Speaks at Debt Seminar in Brazil *[Havana Radio]* 6
Angolan Delegation Arrives for Tripartite Meeting *[Havana Radio]* 6
Soviet Ships Arrive To Conduct Seismic Research *[Havana TV]* 6
Aguirre in Hungary for Interparliamentary Meeting *[Havana TV]* 6
Jorge Risquet Stops in Spain En Route to Italy *[Havana Radio]* 6
First 500 Members of UNTAG Arrive in Namibia *[Havana Radio]* 7

Haiti

Reaction to Government Decree on Constitution 7
Decree Issued by Avril *[LE NOUVELLISTE 14 Mar]* 7
Former Parliamentarians Meet *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 8
More on Legislators Meeting *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 9
Legislators Want Rights Back *[Bonaire Radio]* 10
CONACOM Reacts to Reinstatement *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 10
Democratic Bloc Press Conference *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 11
Further on Press Conference *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 11
U.S. Position on Situation *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 12
Demonstration in Cap-Haitien Dispersed by Army *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 14

CENTRAL AMERICA

El Salvador

President Duarte's Health Reportedly Worsens *[ACAN]* 15
'Responding Well' to Treatment *[EL DIARIO DE HOY 18 Mar]* 15
Vides Casanova on Measures To Counter Boycott *[San Salvador TV]* 15
No Voting in 'at Least 22 Towns' *[ACAN]* 15
New Clandestine Group Threatens FMLN-FDR *[EL DIARIO DE HOY 17 Mar]* 16
Assembly Overrides Duarte Veto on Electoral Law *[EL DIARIO DE HOY 17 Mar]* 16
Chalatenango Mayor Resigns, Flees Country *[EL MUNDO 16 Mar]* 16
Human Rights Leader Criticizes Elections *[Madrid EFE]* 17
Rebel Radio on U.S. Embassy Election 'Plan' *[Radio Venceremos]* 17
Transport, Electricity Situation Updated 17
Red Cross Reports Attack *[Hamburg DPA]* 17
Army Blamed for Ambulance Attack *[Radio Farabundo Marti]* 18
Rebels Reportedly Not To Attack Voters *[ACAN]* 18
Preelection Media Restrictions Criticized *[Radio Venceremos]* 19
FMLN Leader Comments on Election 'Fraud' *[Havana International]* 19

Rebels Order 'Intensification' of Operations *[Radio Venceremos]* 19
Ungo Criticizes ARENA on Voting Centers *[San Salvador TV]* 20
FMLN Leader Admits 'Differences' With Ungo *[Hamburg DPA]* 20
Foreign Minister on ARENA 'Arrogance' *[San Salvador TV]* 21
Zamora, Ungo on Election 'Irregularities' *[San Salvador Radio]* 21
Effects of Transport Stoppage Reported 18 Mar *[San Salvador Radio]* 22
Stoppage To Continue After 19 Mar *[Radio Farabundo Marti]* 23
Bombs Wound Five at San Salvador Market *[San Salvador Radio]* 23
U.S. Coup Plans, Army-PDC Alliance Alleged *[Radio Farabundo Marti]* 24
Duarte Radio Message Urges Citizens To Vote *[San Salvador Radio]* 24
FMLN Attacks Air Force Headquarters *[San Salvador Radio]* 25
Vice President Issues Election Eve Address *[San Salvador Radio]* 25
Election Day Violence, Results Reported 26
Explosions, Clashes Noted *[ACAN]* 26
REUTER Newsman Killed *[ACAN]* 26
TV Reporter Killed in Morazan *[ACAN]* 27
Rebels Condemn 'Cowardly Action' *[Radio Farabundo Marti]* 27
Army Accepts Responsibility *[ACAN]* 27
Acevado on Possible Coup *[AFP]* 28
Rebels Report on Clashes *[Radio Farabundo Marti]* 28
Rebel Attack in San Salvador *[AFP]* 29
Coprefa Reports 6 Dead *[AFP]* 29
Duarte Election Day Interview *[San Salvador TV]* 29
150 Army Casualties Claimed *[Radio Venceremos]* 32
Voting Increases, Shooting Wanes *[ACAN]* 33
Foreign Newsman Killed *[San Salvador Radio]* 33
More on Reporter's Death *[San Salvador Radio]* 34
Col Ponce on Election Process *[San Salvador Radio]* 34
Defense Minister on Casualties *[AFP]* 35
Officer on Chalatenango Attacks *[ACAN]* 35
Vides Casanova on 'Incidents' *[San Salvador Radio]* 36
More Rebel Battle Reports *[Radio Farabundo Marti]* 36
Polls Close; Violence Continues *[AFP]* 37
CD's Zamora on Elections *[San Salvador TV]* 37
Journalists' Group on Deaths *[Buenos Aires REUTER]* 39
Low Voter Turnout Reported *[AFP]* 39
ARENA's Merino on Dialogue *[San Salvador TV]* 40
U.S. Embassy, Military 'Fraud' *[Radio Venceremos]* 40
ARENA Victory Predicted *[San Salvador TV]* 41
ARENA Members Celebrate *[ACAN]* 41
ARENA Proclaims Victory *[Hamburg DPA]* 41
Rebels Laud 'Abstention' Victory *[Radio Venceremos]* 41
Cristiani Claims Victory *[San Salvador TV]* 42
Official Results Due 21 Mar *[AFP]* 42

Guatemala

Reportage on Rumors of Coup Against Cerezo 42
Armed Forces Rule Out *[ACAN]* 42
Army Spokesman Denies Rumors *[PRENSA LIBRE 17 Mar]* 42
URNG Claims 100 Army Casualties in Early March *[ACAN]* 43

Nicaragua

Ortega Speaks on Country's National Dialogue *[Managua Radio]* 43
Government Releases 1,894 Somozist Guards *[AFP]* 46
Further on Guardsmen Release *[Managua Radio]* 46
Pardoning Decree Issued *[Managua Radio]* 47
D'Escoto on Contra Contacts, U.S. Policy *[Madrid EFE]* 47
RN's Cesar Announces Plan To Return to Managua *[AFP]* 48
Communique Says Harassment by Honduran Troops *[Managua Radio]* 48

Panama

Noriega Speaks at Military Graduation Ceremony *[Panama City Radio]* 48
Opposition Announces Government Plan *[ACAN]* 49
Only Invited Election Observers To Be Recognized *[ACAN]* 50
Arrests of Washington, Miami Consuls Ordered *[Panama City TV]* 50
PCC Warned About Fraudulent License Plates *[Panama City TV]* 50
Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Meets Ritter *[Hamburg DPA]* 51

SOUTH AMERICA

Argentina

Machinea on Brady Plan, Debt Payments *[NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS]* 52
Foreign Ministry on 'Indiana I,' Falklands *[NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS]* 53

Brazil

Government Welcomes U.S. Plan on Debt *[O GLOBO 16 Mar]* 53

Chile

Further Reportage on Poison Fruit Incident 53
Pinochet on 'Exaggerated' Ban *[Santiago Radio]* 53
Demonstrators Near U.S. Consulate *[Santiago Radio]* 54
Official Says 'Nearly Solved' *[Madrid EFE]* 54
Official Declares Measures *[Santiago Radio]* 54
Pinochet Curbs Criticism *[TELAM]* 55

Colombia

Government Minister, M-19 Reach Agreement *[Bogota TV]* 55
Barco Address on Agreement *[Bogota TV]* 56
M-19 Commission To Distribute Peace Agreement *[Bogota TV]* 57
Arms Surrender Not Included *[AFP]* 58
'Strict Inspections' for Fruit Imports, Exports *[Bogota Radio]* 58
Senator Says Leftist Paramilitary Group Formed *[Buenos Aires REUTER]* 58

Ecuador

Government Resumes Foreign Debt Payments *[Hamburg DPA]* 59
Correction to Analyst Says Brady Plan 'Positive' 59

Venezuela

Government Approves Foreign Debt Conversion Plan *[Caracas TV]* 59

SELA Recommends Caution on U.S. Brady Plan

PA1803050089 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1749 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Caracas, 17 Mar (DPA)—SELA [Latin American Economic System] Permanent Secretary Carlos Perez del Castillo said today in Caracas that the area's countries must cautiously wait for the Brady plan's implementation but admitted that the new U.S. proposal has "positive elements."

"Far from letting ourselves be swept away by fantasy or the myth that the Brady plan will solve our problems, Latin America and the Caribbean must—today more than ever—present their own proposal to solve the foreign debt crisis," Perez del Castillo stated.

According to the SELA secretary, the new U.S. plan concerning the foreign debt, announced by Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady and supported by President George Bush, has positive aspects because it modifies parts of the "Baker plan;" but it also has negative aspects because it keeps elements of that plan, which failed to achieve positive results in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The most positive aspect in Perez del Castillo's opinion, is that the Brady plan includes a "change of emphasis compared to the Baker plan," particularly when it recognizes the need to reduce the debt.

The plan is also favorable because it directly links the U.S. Government with multilateral financial organizations, introducing new actors in the dialogue in which only the debtor countries and private creditor banks had participated, the official said.

Nevertheless, Perez del Castillo believes that the new plan has negative aspects inherited from the previous one, such as the voluntary aspect of certain proposals, the conditional aspect related to major adjustments in the economies, the individualized treatment, and the appeal to increase the flow of money to the debtors "without quite knowing where it will come from or how the debtors will get it."

"The ideas presented by the Brady plan have opened a door, but it is too early to predict what will happen, so we must withhold our opinion and be somewhat cautious," the Uruguayan expert advised.

Perez del Castillo said that Latin American countries, "far from supposing that the foreign debt problem has been solved because there is talk about reducing part of the debt," must avail themselves of the occasion to issue their own proposal.

Although he recognized that the debt's structure and origins are different in each Latin American and Caribbean country, he recalled that "the overall debt and the social, economic, and political impact withstood by the countries is exactly the same; therefore, we can work in a united manner in the same direction."

Referring to the search for a joint Latin American position, Perez del Castillo recalled the efforts exerted by the Group of Eight and SELA itself and emphasized that the subcontinent has been looking for an agreement for the last 8 years.

"We have acted responsibly and we have always sought a dialogue. If the solutions are not in keeping with our interests, then we will reach the limit of our tolerance, and the countries will be forced to adopt more radical measures," Perez del Castillo warned.

The Brady plan, announced by the U.S. Treasury secretary on 10 March, has elicited different reactions from Latin American governments, though the majority considers it "timid, but with positive aspects."

Regional Countries Approve International Force

PA1603175189 Managua Sistema Sandinista Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Representatives of the five Central American countries approved today the creation of an international force that will verify the regional agreements on security. The delegation will comprise 100 military men from the FRG, Canada, and Spain, who will work under the UN flag. The group called ONUCA [United Nations Observer Group in Central America] will conduct their mission with the help of vehicles at the borders of the five countries of the isthmus and in the Gulf of Fonseca.

Deputy Foreign Minister Victor Hugo Tinoco said the agreement was beneficial and that the alterations made to the original document were secondary.

River Plate Basin Group To Meet in Brasilia

PY1703153789 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2317 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Brasilia, 16 Mar (EFE)—The foreign ministers of the River Plate Basin countries—Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay—will meet on 4 April in Brasilia.

The meeting will be held in accordance with the River Plate Basin Treaty and at the invitation of Brazilian Foreign Minister Roberto Abreu Sodre.

The meeting will evaluate the progress made since the last meeting in December 1987, on matters related to navigation, river and land transportation, quality control of the river basin, flood alert, and border cooperation.

Dante Caputo of Argentina, Valentin Abecia Basavilbaso of Bolivia, Luis Argana of Paraguay, Luis Barrios Tassano of Uruguay, and the Brazilian host will attend the meeting.

The 4 April ministerial meeting is the 18th meeting of ministers of the River Plate Basin and the fourth held in Brazil.

Cuba

Study of New U.S. Plan on Foreign Debt

FL1703195689 Havana Television Cubana Network in Spanish 0130 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Interview With Oscar Perdomo, economic specialist for PRENSA LATINA, and Nestor Pardino, editor for Tele-Rebelde, by "International View" host Eduardo Dimas. All speakers identified by caption—live]

[Text] [Dimas] Good evening, viewers. As you well know, a few days ago the new U.S. plan for dealing with the foreign debt of Latin America and the rest of the underdeveloped world was made public with a great deal of publicity.

This plan, which is known as Baker II or Brady plan, for the present U.S. Treasury secretary, is, we could say while generally speaking, a continuation of the policies of Baker I. This is to say, it was named after the first plan that was made known 3 years ago in 1985 [as heard]. As you know, James Baker is the present U.S. secretary of state.

Today we would like to talk with you about the possibilities and origins of this plan. To do this, we have invited to our studios Comrade (Carper Lugo Marin), economic specialist for PRENSA LATINA, and Comrade (Nestor Parino), an editor for Tele-Rebelde in this same field.

Well, before discussing Baker II, I think it would be a good idea to give a brief mention as to what Baker I was and why it was applied—this plan that was such a big failure.

[Pardino] Well, the origins are in the early part of the 1980's when in 1982, Mexico could not continue its payments on the loans it received. Added to this were other countries that were having problems paying their debts. This made it clear that the idea of the Latin American countries paying their debts was unreal. This is how, in the end of 1985 or beginning of 1986, the Baker plan came about. I think Perdomo could tell us a little more about this.

[Perdomo] Well, it was actually in Seoul at the National Assembly of the IMF and the World Bank, the joint assembly, that Mr Baker, who was then U.S. secretary of the Treasury, announced a plan with the sounds of triumphant horns, promising that the plan, the program, would solve the Third World's foreign debt problem. Actually, the content of the plan was so lousy, from the point of view of the financial sector...

[Dimas, interrupting] It was $29 billion.

[Perdomo] Right, $29 billion—of that, $20 billion given by the commercial banking sector to the will of the bankers. The other $9 billion came from the IMF and the World Bank. Obviously, this did not work. First, the credit never reached the debtor countries. Second, a very small group of countries were chosen to benefit from that plan, under conditions of the IMF and the World Bank and the [words indistinct] recessive that we all know.

[Pardino] With respect to this, the conditions are something we will see later on when we compare the Baker plan to the Brady plan. To explain the conditioning a bit, they asked that the countries adjust themselves to the IMF's formula. They also wanted that the foreign debt situation be dealt with separately, case-by-case, and it is another element in the Brady plan which we will study later on.

[Dimas] [Words indistinct]

[Pardino] Oh, I'm jumping ahead a little. They also asked for the countries to apply these adjustment formulas to the domestic economy of the country. I mentioned another element, perhaps you may remember it...

[Dimas, interrupting] No, I was just going to say that those are the basic elements. What gets our attention is that in 1985, it was September of 1985, for the first time the United States acknowledges the fact that the foreign debt problem is a political problem [words indistinct] which up until that moment they were firmly convinced that it was a problem of economic character.

From there, a certain worry, on behalf of the United States, begins concerning the foreign debt, and in particular the Latin American foreign debt. This went to the point of, just before President Bush took office, the United States stating that the Latin American foreign debt is a danger for U.S. national security. There are figures that make it clear that the situation with the debt in Latin America lead to—and the events in Venezuela are a good example—social upheaval.

[Perdomo] Yes, there is no doubt. What you say is absolutely correct. Now, one of the postulates of the Baker plan to deal with the situation case-by-case comes from the U.S. global policy toward the Third World. This is to say, the policy of bilateralism focusing on the ties with third countries. [as heard]

[Pardino] That has its profound essence in the theory of divide and conquer.

[Perdomo] That is obvious. That is still present in the Brady plan or the Baker II plan as it was called, correctly, by our comrade Alvarez Quinones.

[Dimas] I have here some economic facts which I will give as a base for our discussion. We state that the Baker II plan is not even close to being a solution for the Latin American economy. Also, it is not even close to being a solution to the possible social outbursts and that despite the Brady plan or the Baker II plan or whatever you want to call it, the economic situation of Latin America will continue to be a danger—and we say this in quotations because the United States has no reason to involve itself

in Latin American problems, even though it does—for the so-called national security of the United States which has cost us, the Latin American people, so much.

The facts are the following: The present population of the Latin American subcontinent is 414 million, of which 163 million live in extreme poverty. This is to say that over one-third of Latin America's population lives in extreme poverty. The decade of the 1980's will be called, and with good reason, Latin America's lost will, because instead of advancing, we regressed to the situation of the 1970's. For example, at the end of the 1960's and the beginning of the 1970's, the middle salaries decreased in buying power by 25 percent, to give you an idea. The level of poverty today is just about equal to the poverty level that existed in Latin America in the 1960's. Unemployment and underemployment in Latin America affect 44 percent of the active work force. This should show you just how strongly Latin America is becoming a powder keg. Now, on top of all this, from 1982 to 1988, Latin America paid the industrialized world, the rich world, $150 billion. This is 40.7 percent of all the wealth produced in Latin America and the Caribbean.

[Pardino] You are a bit low on that, $180 billion.

[Dimas] You're right, it is $180 billion.

[Perdomo] You're referring to 1982 to the present?

[Dimas] I was meaning up to 1988.

[Pardino] Well, its debt has increased by over $50 billion. This is to say that the situation is not improving. Instead, it gets worse.

[Dimas] It doesn't improve, that's right.

[Pardino] Well, I think that now we could look at the Brady plan.

[Dimas] Yes, I think so. Perdomo?

[Perdomo] The Brady plan, as we have said here, is a continuation of the Baker plan. What is different in the plan proposed by the U.S. secretary of the Treasury last week? For the first time, the United States has admitted that there is a need to reduce the foreign debt. Now, what does this really mean? They talk about reducing the debt by some 20 to 30 percent. In total this would be a reduction of some $180 billion. We would return to the debt level of 1981, in which the foreign debt of Latin America and the Caribbean exceeded $288.4 billion. This means that in 8 years we would have the same level of debt that we have now with one factor making it worse; our economies will be extremely deteriorated because, as the commander in chief said, they have taken so much blood out of Latin America, it would be like taking blood from a sick man who has no more blood to give! They have no more blood to withdraw from the nations of this region.

The most interesting thing here is that the banks will not voluntarily agree to decrease those debts. That is a fallacy; that is demagogy, a utopia, rhetoric.

[Dimas] You are referring to Brady's statement that the banks will voluntarily reduce, as accreditors, their part?

[Perdomo] That is correct. What's more, he expects them to do it case-by-case.

[Dimas] There would be chosen countries too.

[Pardino] That is one possibility. The other possibility is that the accreditor countries, via the IMF and the World Bank, would [words indistinct] to buy their debts in the secondary market. This is one thing that, for now, the IMF, the World Bank, and the commercial banks have not accepted—that the accreditor countries buy their debts. This is another fallacy.

[Dimas] What's more, [words indistinct] that the IMF to the adjustments that they impose.

[Perdomo] Actually, it's a vicious circle; it's a dead-end street because there is no solution to the debt problem. It has been proven that the debt cannot be collected on, it's unpayable, even though this is the repetition of a concept. However, this is a concept that is valid and will continue to be valid in this problem of the debt. What the United States wants to do is open a fifth column to break the unification process of the debtor countries. That's all it is folks; let's not deceive ourselves!

[Dimas] Excuse me Perdomo, what gets my attention is this other track they propose to reduce the debt, the one you just mentioned. This is the plan in which they want to reduce the debt through loans by the IMF, the World Bank and, from what I read today in one of your articles, the Inter-American Development Bank to buy the debt, as long as the IMF's adjustments are accepted.

[Perdomo] That is the basic formula.

[Dimas] I believe [words indistinct] Brazil. This is from 1987—the beginning of 1988. It is $121 billion, 37 percent of the gross national product [GNP]: Mexico, $106 billion—76 percent of the GNP; Argentina, $55 billion—79 percent of the GNP; Venezuela, $36 billion—73 percent of the GNP; Chile, $21 billion—113 percent of, that is more than, the GNP in a year; Peru, $18 billion; Colombia, $17 billion—47 percent of the GNP; Ecuador, $11 billion—103 percent of the GNP; Uruguay, $6 billion—79 percent; and Bolivia, $5 billion—89 percent. What part of that debt can they buy?

[Perdomo] Yes, it is unrealistic. In addition, commercial banks are not selling it.

[Pardino] But also, under which terms are they going to buy it? One of the former presidents of the Central Bank of Brazil, (Langoni), said recently in Rio de Janeiro that

it is really untrue that the Brazilian foreign debt was being sold in the secondary market at 26 cents per dollar and that it was not true that the Brazilian foreign debt had been reduced by 74 percent. He gave as an example—to show you how this idea is so weak and that it has no logical foundation—that to go to the secondary market to buy Brazilian foreign debt bonds at U.S. .26.... [rephrases] If there is a strong demand, it begins to rise and rise and this supposed panacea is dissolved.

[Dimas] [Words indistinct]

[Perdomo] Now, regarding this, let me tell you briefly....

[Dimas, interrupting] Excuse me, let me express my idea. The Latin American foreign debt has devaluated. For example, it is known that Bolivia's foreign debt is now worth 8 percent. If it was worth 5 billion, it is worth $400 million now. It is known that the Peruvian foreign debt is also around some 10 percent. So it goes with the Brazilian and Mexican foreign debt. I believe that the Brazilian debt is one of the ones that is worth the most now. If foreign debt bonds begin to be purchased that debt would automatically increase. Wouldn't that be the case?

[Pardino] It is possible. So, Dimas, all this is a fairy tale. A fairy tale in which the child who was waiting for Santa Clause—using the image of the Christmas festivities—to come down the chimney. As a matter of fact, Brady's first name is Nicholas. If we paraphrase this, he is Father Noel, Santa Clause, Saint Nicholas, who comes down the chimney with the gift for the poor Indian child who lives south of the Rio Bravo and places the little gift on his little shoes. It turns out that Mr Brady left the bag home. All he did was promise a gift. The child was left anxious because he did not receive his gift. This is truly....

[Perdomo, interrupting] It is tragic and it is also funny. Regarding what they said about part of the debt being is pardoned, actually, the ones who have to pardon it are us because we are the large creditors, as Fidel said. It is also not a new thing. Banks began to protect themselves for some time against this Third World debt. They have begun to take out part of the debt from their profits. It is said that at this time almost one-fourth of the debt no longer appears in the banks' books—of the commercial banks—because they already recovered it. So, the Brady plan is not new in that sense. It is a palliative the same way as the Baker plan was. To sum up, this is the idea: It is a palliative to the extent that it does not go to the core of the problem, which is the establishment of the new international economic order.

A third aspect of this is that it is not viable. It is not viable because as the Baker plan did, it calls the commercial banks to act voluntarily. Commercial banks operate with the mechanisms of profit, the cornerstone of capitalism. Subsequently, they are not going to listen to this call unless a general agreement is established.

I personally believe that the solution continues to be that proposed by the commander in chief in 1985, an arrangement in which part of the military spending is eliminated so that banks can recover the debt and the Third World does not have to pay. The new international economic order would be established in this way. There is no other solution.

[Dimas] Then, there will be no solution because I do not believe that the new international economy is going to be implemented for now.

I was going to say that undoubtedly the Baker plan is better than the first one. First of all, it acknowledges that at least part of the debt is uncollectable. I believe that in this case, Mr Nicholas Brady has to be recognized. But the plan is far from what is expected and is far from what the United States really has to do if it is true that it considers—as it says is considers—the foreign debt problem in Latin America as a threat to its national security. This is not seen anywhere.

I am inclined to believe—I believe we already said this—that it is a matter of a U.S. attempt to start interfering in Latin America's unity process. It is not that they may not attempt to implement this plan—I do believe that they are going to try to implement it—but it is going to be done with this objective. They are going to implement it on a case-by-case basis, using the adjustment mechanisms of the IMF.

In other words, with all those aggravating [circumstances], this will give us an idea of where we are truly headed. What do you think?

[Pardomo] To what extent do you think there will be a voluntary reduction of the debt? The banks are asking for financial support from the U.S. Treasury.

[Dimas] Indeed, the banks have created a large problem with that. The banks have gotten to the point where they say that they need to be given many financial concessions. They even spoke of [word indistinct] in U.S. banks. I think the same thing would happen, because not all of Latin America's foreign debt is with U.S. banks.

[Pardomo] Yes, I think 73 percent of the debt is with U.S. banks.

[Pardino] Without breaking the line of thought of this remark, I have a very recent report on last year's earnings for those banks. The report shows that the earnings were over $25.3 billion. That is what these people earned while the adjustment programs [as heard] were taking place, while Venezuela went through its crisis—we have seen videos of it—while Brazil is involved in a similar situation. Therefore, these people are asking [for payment] but at the cost of the people, Latin America.

[Perdomo] The figure of $25.3 billion that U.S. banks earned in 1988 is equal to the total debt of Central America and the 10 English-speaking countries that constitute the Caribbean Community, Caricom. In other words, it is equal to the current debt of 18 Latin American and Caribbean countries. This gives us a clear idea of the problem.

Returning to the Brady plan, it will have its first scenario when it is applied in Amsterdam, in the next meeting of the Inter-American Development Bank which begins on Monday. As you know, it has just been approved in Washington, with the group of countries with the largest debt, a plan for the seventh [as heard] replenishment of funds of the Inter-American Development Bank, IDB. This has just been imposed by the United States. The United States is crowning an old aspiration: to transform the IBD, along with the IMF and the World Bank, into one of the support pillars of its new emphasis on the debt. The traditional confrontation between Latin America and U.S. interests will be present there. What is the United States trying to accomplish with this? It is trying to finance specific plans for the larger debtors, but what about the smaller debtors? Nicaragua, for example, has not received in 6 years a single [word indistinct]; Panama no longer receives IDB credits.

[Dimas] The United States has 34 percent...

[Perdomo, interrupting] It has 34.5 percent.

[Dimas] It has almost 35 percent of the votes; therefore, it can do practically whatever it wants.

[Pardino] The financing, the way they [not further identified] were talking about it, does not work either [words indistinct] with the Brady plan. Maybe we should talk about that a bit, Dimas? We should talk about the repercussion it has had. How have the governments reacted to the Brady plan? For example, I have taken some notes here to be precise, on the statements given by the Ministries of Brazil, Mexico, and I even have statements made by Carlos Andres Perez. These were immediate statements made after the plan was announced. I think, in a general sense and I am not quoting them literally, they propose [rephrases] recognize that it is a novelty the way in which the United States emphasizes the elimination of part of the debt, which is uncollectable, but that it is not sufficient. Furthermore, we must still see whether or not this will materialize. These are official reactions. The nonofficial reactions of the opposition and the unions, to date, are a complete condemnation to this plan which does not resolve the problems, and it is logical that it does not.

[Dimas, addressing Pardino] Did you want to say something else?

[Pardino] In a way, the cautious reaction by Latin America toward the Brady plan reflects the attitude of a person who has a noose around his neck. Well, it's a little bit but it's just that, a little breath. [sentence as heard] But you know, they don't even agree on that breath. It all has to do with the will and the inviability of the plan.

[Dimas] Besides all of this, I don't see any substantial base in this, and I repeat, we are not trying to make any propaganda against the Brady Plan, which I repeat is better than the first one....

[Pardino, interrupting] Carlos Rafael said the results were ridiculously low.

[Dimas] They are ridiculously low and so I don't see any solution to it either.

Well esteemed viewers, we have tried to bring you the main aspects of the Brady plan which, as I told you at the beginning of the program, was publicly proposed with a lot of noise from the media after keeping Latin American and international public opinion in suspense about the details of the plan. Evidently, as we have seen, it is not going to solve the main problems of Latin America. I would say that it is not going to solve any of them. As Comrade Perdomo said, we would return to the level of 1981 which, in 8 years, would have us in the same amount of debt or perhaps we would be in worse shape than now. This is why we do not believe this plan will solve anything. However, we invite you to reach your own conclusions.

Thank you, Perdomo for coming to the program. Also, thank you Pardino and, as always, thank you viewers for your attention.

Good evening.

Castro Attends Public Health Ministry Meeting

FL1803191289 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro has presided over the meeting that reviewed the fulfillment of the 1988 work plans for hospitals and research institutes of the Ministry of Public Health in Havana City.

Dr Frank Tobey, provincial director of public health, gave the report on the results of the work plans which emphasized the completion of 1,019 projects in hospitals and institutes. These projects permitted a considerable increase in the number of beds for the medical field.

In a statement Fidel made about the document, he proposed to include in the report the progress made in the area of scientific research and its introduction into medical practice, such as the antimeningococci vaccine and transplant surgery. He also proposed to include the achievements of the child heart center of the William Soler Hospital, as well as the achievements of the centers for genetic engineering and biotechnology, immunoassay, ocular microsurgery and transplants, and nervous system, among others.

Rodriguez Speaks at Debt Seminar in Brazil
FL1803135189 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Vice President Carlos Rafael Rodriguez has said in Sao Paulo, Brazil that the problem of the Latin American foreign debt has ceased being a scientific debate and has become a true social drama. The Cuban leader spoke at the last meeting of the international seminar on the foreign debt and economic development that has just concluded in that city.

Carlos Rafael Rodriguez argued that the recent events in Venezuela clearly show the certainty that the foreign debt is a social drama. He said that the events in Venezuela confirmed what President Fidel Castro had forecast years ago. The chief of the Cuban Revolution has indicated on many occasions that a social uprising can be a consequence of the unbearable situation created by the debt. The Cuban vice president also said that looking at the debt from a political perspective, one must first consider its unpayable nature, which Fidel emphasized. Carlos Rafael Rodriguez then said: It is interesting that the SELA [Latin American Economic System] and CEPAL [Economic Commission for Latin America], regional economic organizations have recognized that the debt is unpayable, although they put a (?condition) on it under the current international conditions [sentence as heard].

Further on, Carlos Rafael Rodriguez said the Brady plan does not give solutions to the serious problems that the United States imposed on the region. The Cuban leader cited as some of these problems high interest rates, economic protectionism, unequal trade, and cessation of financing. Finally, he said that to dedicate part of the war budget to the payment of the debt and to subsidize the interest rate is an adequate way of relating disarmament to economic development.

Angolan Delegation Arrives for Tripartite Meeting
FL1803130189 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] The Angolan delegation to the meeting of the joint commission of Angola, Cuba, and South Africa has arrived in Havana. The Angolan delegation is headed by Foreign Vice Minister Venancio de Moura and was received at the airport by Division General Ulises Rosales [del Toro], alternate member of the Communist Party of Cuba [PCC] Central Committee Politburo, and Carlos Aldana, secretary of the PCC Central Committee.

The joint commission meeting, in which the Soviet Union and the United States will act as observers, will begin on Monday [20 March]. The commission's objective is to facilitate the solution to any discrepancy dealing with the interpretation or execution of the tripartite agreement on Southwest Africa.

Soviet Ships Arrive To Conduct Seismic Research
FL1703152289 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Soviet ships "Aivanovich Trusov" and "Letzin" have arrived in the Port of Havana. Their goal is to conduct seismic research in the Cuban marine platform and search for petroleum and gas reserves. The vessels are equipped with the most modern technology. They will remain in Cuban waters for over 5 months.

Researchers will work at the Boca de Jaruco deposit in the Cardenas Bay and in the area between the bay and Cayo Fragoso. They will study 5,700 km of seismic profiles. This research will be the foundation to determine the most favorable structures and later to carry out the offshore test drilling of wells.

The Basic Industry Ministry has maintained relations with its Soviet counterpart for the last 5 years in order to carry out this work in our territorial waters and assess the outlook of petroleum and gas in our territory and the geological structures on solid ground. All the data will be processed in the Soviet Union.

Aguirre in Hungary for Interparliamentary Meeting
FL1803144389 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1400 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Severo Aguirre del Cristo, acting president of the National Assembly of the People's Government [ANPP], who is in Budapest, has called for a solution to the economic crisis and for the application of a new international economic order in order to attain peace.

Speaking at the 81st Conference of the Interparliamentary Union that is being held in the Hungarian capital, Aguirre affirmed that the growing misery in which the people of the Third World live can no longer be ignored. It is a misery caused by a foreign debt which is over $1 (?trillion), $400 billion of which corresponds to Latin America and the Caribbean.

The president [title as heard] of the ANPP spoke at the conference of the Interparliamentary Union on the general subject of the debate on the economic, political, and social situation of the world.

Jorge Risquet Stops in Spain En Route to Italy
FL1803030889 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 0218 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Jorge Risquet Valdes, member of the Politburo of the Communist Party of Cuba, was received today in Madrid by Julio Anguita, secretary general of the Spanish Communist Party [PCE]. Risquet presented Anguita with an invitation from Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz to visit the island. The invitation was accepted and it will be fulfilled soon.

Information from Madrid indicates that during the meeting, the PCE secretary general and Jorge Risquet Valdes analyzed matters of bilateral interest, as well as topics pertaining to international events.

Jorge Risquet made a stopover in Madrid en route to Rome where he will attend the congress of the Italian Communist Party, adds the PRENSA LATINA news report.

First 500 Members of UNTAG Arrive in Namibia

FL1703145889 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] The first 500 members of the UN Transitional Assistance Group [UNTAG] for the independence of Namibia have arrived in that country. It was officially reported that the majority of the 4,650-men military component that will be initially deployed, will arrive in Namibia during the last week of March.

The application of UN Security Council Resolution 435 for the independence of that territory will begin on 1 April.

Haiti

Reaction to Government Decree on Constitution

Decree Issued by Avril

FL1703140489 Port-au-Prince LE NOUVELLISTE in French No 33.483, 14 Mar 89 pp 1, 12

["Text" of decree issued by Lieutenant General Prosper Avril, president of the Haitian military government, at the National Palace in Port-au-Prince on 13 March]

[Text] In view of the military government's proclamation of 17 September 1988;

In view of the decree of 20 June 1988 dissolving the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies;

In view of the 8 July 1988 message of the military government of back then, setting aside the Constitution of 1987;

Considering that the military government of 17 September 1988 has, in all its initiatives with a view to establishing an irreversible democracy in Haiti, always done its utmost to adhere to the spirit of the Constitution of 1987;

Considering that it is important to more formally guarantee the fundamental freedoms of the Haitian people;

Considering that these freedoms are clearly defined in the Constitution of 1987;

Considering that it is advisable to bring the Constitution of 1987 back into effect;

Considering, however, that certain dispositions of this Constitution do not go with the form of the current government;

Considering that, consequently, some of this Constitution's articles should be temporarily shelved;

(?Upon recommendation by) the minister of justice, and after deliberation in the Council of Ministers, it is decreed:

Article 1—The Constitution of 1987 is hereby brought back into effect, with the exception of Articles 42-1, 42-2, 43-3, 60-1, 88, 90, 95-1, 111, 111-1, 111-2, 133, 137, 137-1, 143, 149, 150, 155, 158, 159, 160, 166 (second paragraph), 169, 171, 185, 202, 228, 267, 267-3, 278-1, 278-2, 279-1, 281, 281-1, 282-1, 283, and 284-3, which are hereby temporarily shelved.

Article 2—The executive power is exercised by the president of the military government, president of the Republic and chief of state, until the president of the Republic elected through presidential elections takes the oath of office.

Article 3—The attributions of the legislative powers are temporarily exercised by the executive power, until the validation of the powers of the elected members of the Senate and of the Chamber of Deputies.

Article 4—This decree abrogates all laws or dispositions thereof, all decrees or dispositions thereof, and all decree laws or dispositions thereof contrary to it, and is to be published and carried out at the suit of the minister of justice.

Issued at the National Palace in Port-au-Prince on 13 March 1989, 186th year of Independence.

[Signed] Prosper Avril, lieutenant general, Haitian Armed Forces [FADH]

By the president of the military government:

The minister of justice: Augustin Romain Ceme

The minister of interior and national defense: Acedius Saint-Louis, Colonel, FADH

The minister of foreign affairs and worship: Serge Elie Charles

The minister of information and coordination: Anthony Virginie Saint-Pierre

The minister of economy and finance: Leonce F. Thelusma

The minister of public health and population: Serge Pinthro

The minister of public works, transport, and communications: Franck Paultre

The minister of agriculture, natural resources, and rural development: Frederic Agenor

The minister of national education, youth, and sports: Remy Zamor

The minister of social affairs: Arnault Guerrier

The minister of commerce and industry: Yvon Cesar

The minister of public administration and civil service: Wilner Dessources

The minister of planning and external cooperation: Theophile Roche

Former Parliamentarians Meet

FL1703143189 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Several former parliamentarians showed up at the Legislative Palace this morning in response to an invitation from the former vice president of the national assembly, Mr Jacques Saint-Louis. The police forbade them access to the building, slamming the door in the faces of the former deputies and senators.

Mr Jacques Saint-Louis had invited the members of the 44th legislature to meet to pronounce themselves on the reinstatement of the Constitution of 1987, 36 articles of which have been temporarily shelved by the Avril government.

In his note of invitation, Mr Jacques Saint-Louis wrote, and I quote: The bureau of the national assembly, which is the expression of the people's will, concerned with defending the nation's higher interests and maintaining the public peace, and wishing to spare the nation setbacks with incalculable and unforeseeable consequences pernicious to the nation's territorial integrity and sovereignty, deems it is its patriotic duty to summon to a special session the members of the 44th legislature on Thursday 16 March at 1100, in order to deal with and pronounce themselves on the ways and means of the return to legality desired by the executive power and the Haitian people in its entirety. End quote.

This meeting was thus not able to be held at the legislative palace, for the police forbade the former parliamentarians access to the building. The parliamentarians are planning to go to the Holiday Inn [Le Plaza] Hotel sometime during this newscast. Our reporters will tell us whether or not this meeting is held. [passage omitted]

[Mobile Unit reporter Marcus—live, from the Holiday Inn] We are reporting live from the Holiday Inn Hotel, where the legislative chamber has been temporarily transferred. [passage omitted]

[Second Mobile Unit reporter Clarens—live] A first attempt of the members of the parliament to meet at the Legislative Palace was repelled this morning by the police. The doors and even the windows of the Legislative Palace were shut just now.

Since the military authorities have refused (?to allow) this meeting, since they have prevented it, the senators and deputies of the 44th legislature, which has been dissolved since 20 June 1988, following the coup d'etat that overthrew Leslie Manigat, are at the Holiday Inn Hotel. They are headed by Jacques Saint-Louis, and have gone to the Toussaint Louverture hall of the Holiday Inn. There are a few more than 20 deputies and senators present here, in response to Jacques Saint-Louis's call. [passage omitted]

If the parliamentarians have chosen to meet today to present a common front vis-a-vis this decision by the Avril government, it is because they also notice certain blunders, certain mistakes, in this measure. For example, (?they are citing, behind the scenes) Article 111, paragraph 8, which gives the parliamentarians, the senators and deputies, the right to assemble. This article is in effect, they say. [passage omitted]

We have with us here, two parliamentarians—one senator and one deputy, Reynold Georges and Jean Michel Richardson—who are going to talk to us a little about why this initiative was taken and also why they themselves chose to accept this invitation from Jacques Saint-Louis.

[Begin recording] [Georges, in Creole] [Passage omitted] We responded to the invitation because we find it constitutional. For one thing, we have always said that the Constitution is still in effect. Also, even if the military government, with the force of its weapons, tells you that it has removed 36 articles from the Constitution, we say that constitutions are not sold retail, so to speak. You either take it or leave it. [passage omitted] The Haitian Army must enter into solidarity with the Haitian people and become one, because the Army comes from the people too. And we think that the Haitian people must rise up once and for all, because.... [changes thought] We are not here [words indistinct]. No, that is not why we are here. [passage omitted] We are forming a common front, and we are asking for the solidarity of the entire Haitian people, of all [words indistinct], to set this matter of elections aside, with a view to the greater interests of the nation. [passage omitted]

[Metropole reporter Clarens, in Creole] The question that automatically arises is: If today, Article 111, paragraph 8, allows the legislative chamber, the Haitian Parliament, which has been dissolved since 20 June, to meet to discuss a decision made by the Avril government, (?doesn't) this automatically also permit.... [changes thought] The Namphy government overthrew Mr Manigat by means of a coup d'etat. Doesn't this permit Mr Manigat too to return to power? I mean, if the legislative chamber can still be in effect?

[Richardson, in Creole] [Passage omitted] In any case, that is not why we are here. [passage omitted] We are here so they can bring back the Constitution, because when it was ratified, the people didn't ratify it with 36 or 35 articles missing. We came back here (?to take a vote on) the Constitution, because when we were in the legislature, they made us swear to respect the Constitution, and everyone is supposed to respect it.

[Clarens] Georges and Richardson, other people are asking that the Avril government either eliminate the Constitution totally or come up with another one, instead of adopting this one with 36 articles removed.

[Unidentified speaker] No, no, no, no, no, no, no. There is no question of doing this—the Constitution of 1987. Haiti will never have another. That is the one we want. That is the one the people voted in favor of. [passage omitted]

[Clarens] With all its articles?

[Speaker] All of them, without exception.

[Clarens] And what about Article 291.

[Speaker] Well, Article 291, despite the fact that we know that 291 should not be in the Constitution—because I myself am not in the Constitution. [passage omitted] The person is free. And it is up to the people to know that that person is not good, and not to elect him.

[Clarens] But weren't the Haitian people also in favor of Article 291, Jean Michel...?

[Richardson, interrupting] However, however, [Richardson repeats himself] since they ratified the Constitution, I am in favor of it. I am for the Constitution, and since 291 is in it, I accept it, because I am in favor of the Constitution in its entirety. I may not agree with 291, but I am in favor of the Constitution, which means that I....[incomplete sentence as heard] [end recording] [passage omitted]

More on Legislators Meeting

FL1703172289 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Yesterday, deputies and senators met at the Holiday Inn [Le Plaza] Hotel, because the Legislative Palace was not accessible to them for it was guarded by the military and the doors were closed. Therefore, they went to the Holiday Inn to meet.

There weren't many of them—only 30 out of some 103. No decision came out of the meeting because they said there was not a quorum—that there were not enough deputies and senators present. [passage omitted]

Thirty former members of the 44th legislature, 3 senators and 27 deputies, met at the Holiday Inn Thursday morning after the doors of the Legislative Palace remained closed in order to keep them from entering and responding to the invitation by former President of the Chamber of Deputies Jacques Saint-Louis in connection with the government decree to reinstate the Constitution. [passage omitted]

At the proposal of Reynold Georges, former senator for the central plateau, for the time being they are going to form several committees to work on the Constitution and summon all members to a meeting next week.

[Begin Georges recording] [Passage omitted] The summons came quickly. Many members of parliament who are abroad called me and told me that they would like to be here and that they will be back in Haiti next week. Some from the provinces did not have time to get here because they (?were already doing) other things—private visits—and in order to come, they would have had to make plans. [passage omitted]

I am proposing to the assembly that the president form committees to work on the constitutional crisis the country is experiencing and summon the assembly again in a week or two, whenever the assembly chooses. And at that time, I think we can validly study.... [changes thought] We will be empowered to make a pronouncement on the matter and to call in the government, as per the Constitution. [end recording]

In the speech he made to open the session, Jacques Saint-Louis said he thinks that the Prosper Avril government has taken a step by putting the Constitution back into effect—especially Article 111.8, which says that the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate cannot be dissolved for any reason whatsoever, nor can they be suspended for awhile, nor can the the terms of the members of the Chamber of Deputies be extended.

It is for this reason that the former parliamentarians think that they have a role to play in Haiti's current situation and they ask political leaders, the nation's youth, merchants, and the Army, to all be of good will, in order to save Haiti.

At the Holiday Inn's conference room, we noticed several former deputies and senators such as Reginald Riboul, Jean-Michel Richardson, Serge Beaulieu, Senator Xavier Saint-Louis, and so forth.

We must point out that most of the former parliamentarians had assembled in front of the Legislative Palace on the Bicentennaire. However, they found all the doors shut and four policemen guarding the place. The former parliamentarians were vexed—especially since they think that since the Constitution is back in effect, they too can go back to work and return to the Legislative Palace. The former deputies declared that the Constitution had been shelved but that the legislature [la chamb] was never dissolved.

[Begin recording] [Saint-Louis] I summoned the National Assembly by virtue of the power vested in me. The headquarters of the National Assembly—both Senate and Chamber of Deputies—is the Legislative Palace, commonly called House of the Peoplé. However, upon arriving there, we found the doors shut. Therefore, we

are going to take measures to meet elsewhere because wherever the members of the National Assembly are constitutes the National Assembly.

The day of the 20 June coup d'etat, a Monday, was not a day the National Assembly was in session. All... [rephrases] most of the parliamentarians were in the provinces and it would have been very difficult to obtain a quorum in order to hold a special session. However, once the government issued a decree dissolving the legislature, this automatically abolished the Constitution. And what can a legislature do against the military? Its only weapons are a Constitution, its conscience, and the profound aspirations of the Haitian people. There was nothing it could do.

Now, once General Prosper Avril's military government puts the Constitution into effect through a decree, automatically and by virtue of Article 111.8 of the Constitution, the chamber of deputies and the senate are back.

[Reporter] You are a legislature who came out of the 17 January elections.

[Saint-Louis] Yes.

[Reporter] In your opinion, constitutionally speaking, was that election a constitutional election to the point where you are now demanding the right to come and meet again, under the banner of the Constitution of 29 March?

[Unidentified speaker] That's a very nice question! It is not a matter of constitutional or unconstitutional elections. There was a government in power. There was a Provisional Electoral Council that had been created to hold elections. The first elections, the elections of 29 [November], went off the way we all know. They decided to hold elections again on 17 January. I myself, personally, as a member of the constitutional assembly that wrote the Constitution of 1987, saw that I was obliged to participate in those elections because that Constitution ordered us to, on 7 February 1988, have the government in power, the CNG [National Government Council], transfer power to a constitutionally-elected president. We did not want to get into any complications so we were obliged to run in the 17 [January] elections.

And regarding popular support, I myself am the deputy for Vallieres. Go to my area, Vallieres. Go to Mombin Crochu. Go to Cajuste. Go ask about (Jacinthe Louis) [words indistinct]. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Reynold Georges once again denounced the crooked wheelings and dealings of the National Concerted Action Front and the CEP [Provisional Electoral Council] of 29 November [1987].

We remind listeners that Leslie Manigat, the former president issuing from the 17 January elections which the Haitian people boycotted, has always declared and believes that he is the constitutional president of Haiti.

Jacques Saint-Louis summoned the National Assembly to a meeting following the decree reinstating the Constitution. In the summons he pointed out that the Constitution is a single bloc. No one other than the legislature can remove or add any articles to the Constitution. Thus, by summoning the legislature, Saint-Louis wanted to show that it is the entire Constitution that must be reinstated. Today, many former deputies and senators applauded Article 111.8, which says that no one can dissolve the legislature.

However, we must remind listeners that many deputies and senators from the 44th legislature who met yesterday to pronounce themselves on the ways and means of the reinstatement of the Constitution, became development advisors after the National Assembly was dissolved on 20 June 1988. Others were members of the provisional committee to manage the interests of the legislature.

We must also point out that there was no reaction from any senator or deputy following the dissolving of the National Assembly by General Namphy on Monday 20 June, 1988. Neither was there any reaction on 9 July, when Gen Namphy abrogated the Constitution of 29 March 1987.

Legislators Want Rights Back

FL1703125989 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] A group of former Haitian legislators met in Port-au-Prince yesterday to call on the government to restore the Constitution. They are also demanding recognition of the National Assembly which was dissolved last June in a military coup. President Prosper Avril announced he was restoring the Constitution earlier this week. The legislators also want their constitutional rights as lawmakers given back. They will hold another meeting next Tuesday [21 March] to report on what they call Haiti's constitutional crisis.

CONACOM Reacts to Reinstatement

FL1703171889 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Political leaders are continuing to state their opinion regarding the return to the Constitution of 1987, 36 articles of which have been temporarily shelved by the Avril government. [passage omitted]

For its part, CONACOM, National Committee of the Congress of Democratic Movements, warns President Avril against making any amendments to the Constitution of 1987. While it reacts positively to—salutes—the restoration of the Constitution, CONACOM makes two observations about President Avril's act.

First, CONACOM points out that the temporary shelving of Articles 42 and 267, on the trying of members of the Armed Forces, surprises CONACOM. CONACOM

says these articles have a rightful place in the Constitution. They were, on the one hand, written to permit justice to be better distributed, to the benefit of the members of the Armed Forces, who had been humiliated for too long by the Duvalierist dictatorship; and, on the other hand, to bring into harmony the relations between members of the Armed Forces and civilians, in the interest of democracy, says CONACOM.

Secondly, [CONACOM points out that] the government's shelving of Article 284.3—which forbids any popular voting which tends to modify the Constitution—is an unconstitutional initiative that portends possible amendments to the Constitution. Such a decision would constitute a threatening maneuver for the Haitian people which have already made so many sacrifices—notably, in the summer of 1987—for this Constitution, which it ratified massively.

CONACOM calls on the nation to be vigilant in order to prevent any irregular amending of the Constitution. Furthermore, CONACOM asks the military government to take concrete measures to put an end to the climate of insecurity, and to guarantee freedom of assembly in the nation's towns and communal sections, in the name of the Constitution of 1987. [passage omitted]

Democratic Bloc Press Conference

FL1803152589 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Excerpts] At a big meeting held yesterday at the Oloffson Hotel, there were statements made to the effect that the military government's [13 March] degree assassinates the Constitution of 1987. The first person to make such a statement was Mr Eddy Volel, speaking for the Christian Democratic Assembly.

Volel said this during a press conference held at the Oloffson Hotel yesterday morning by the political parties and organizations that make up what is called the Democratic Bloc. [passage omitted]

During the press conference, the speakers defined the Democratic Bloc's position vis-a-vis the decree of last 13 March reinstating the Constitution of 1987 minus 36 articles that have been temporarily shelved because they are incompatible with the form of government currently in power.

The Bloc made reference to principles of constitutional law. Speaking for the Democratic Bloc, (Patrick Henry) of the Haitian Republican Party [Pati Repibliken Ayisyen an] said the Bloc feels that no organization or individual is authorized to touch the Constitution in any way—not to write it, amend it, or shelve articles of it—without being empowered to write a constitution.

The Bloc also says that there is no need whatsoever to issue a decree putting the Constitution of 1987 back into effect—in its entirety. In the Bloc's opinion, no one can shelve any article whatsoever from the Constitution, which was massively ratified by the Haitian people.

According to (Patrick Henry), the Democratic Bloc considers that the Constitution of 1987 has never stopped being in effect—that is has always been there; and he insisted that this Constitution be respected and applied normally, without removing anything from it or adding anything to it.

Also, the Democratic Bloc also considers that the transitional provisions of this Constitution that they [not further identified] gave the National Government Council of back then, gave (?the council) the privilege of temporarily assuming the executive and legislative powers during the period of transition toward a constitutional government. They did not, back then, give Henry Namphy the Constitution (?in bits and pieces). Thus, they insist that the Constitution must be applied normally.

At the end of the press conference, Reverend Sylvio C. Claude, the leader of the Haitian Christian Democratic Party, also came to understand that the Democratic Bloc has no intention whatsoever of asking that the military government resign. Rather, it must force the government to respect the Constitution of 1987, which was massively ratified by the Haitian people. Also, he insisted that things had to be done legally in Haiti. In order for the Haitian people to be able to catch their breath, and so that the democratic sector will be satisfied, everything must be done "straight". No one has any right to do certain things in a dictatorial manner.

That was what Reverend Claude said. He insisted that he was not asking for a change of government, but was asking that the Constitution of 1987 be respected and that everything be done normally, within the law here in Haiti.

Further on Press Conference

FL1803154989 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Excerpts] The Democratic Bloc, which is made up of some 10 political organizations, said in a press conference held yesterday that it will not participate in any elections under General Prosper Avril, and the Bloc members asked that the general reinstate the 36 articles of the Constitution of 1987 that he has put on ice.

We must also point out that there was a little problem, and Eddy Volel announced that he is no longer in the Bloc.

[Begin recording] [Reporter] At a press conference on the political juncture held this morning [16 March] at the Holiday Inn Hotel, the Democratic Bloc (?said) that the government decree which keeps part of the Constitution has no raison d'etre, and endangers the future of democracy in

Haiti. The Bloc said it insists not only that the Constitution—in its entirety—be respected and applied but also that all provisional governments stay within the framework of the transitional dispositions in the Constitution.

That is why they do not at all agree with decision made by Gen Avril to get into the Constitution. They say that anyone who accepts this decree is recognizing the general's government as a constitutional government, a definitive government.

[Unidentified speaker] [Passage omitted] However, there was a halt in the process, in the transitional dispositions. Thus, we can say that the transitional dispositions never ran out. They were not exhausted because they did not attain their objective. They will have run out when the Provisional Electoral Council, which was supposed to hold elections and whose mandate was supposed to have come to an end upon the swearing-in of the elected president... [changes thought] and since that council was unconstitutionally dissolved, we of the Democratic Bloc feel that things have been blocked from that time on, regarding the transitional dispositions—and that everything that came after that became unconstitutional and unacceptable. And that is why 80 percent of the civilian population and a majority of the political sector refused the Manigat government, the legislative elections, Mr Gilbert's Provisional Electoral Council, and everything else that was done. Because, following this logic, we saw that all these things were unconstitutional, because the Provisional Electoral Council had been unconstitutionally dissolved. [end recording]

The Democratic Bloc's objective is to establish democracy in Haiti, to bring about change on the basis of the Constitution. That is why they are asking for a return to the Constitution in its entirety—not a partial return. They say they will not participate in elections if the Constitution is not reinstated in its entirety; and they do not intend to go to elections under General Avril, even if all the organizations (?concerned) were to send representatives to the election council.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified speaker] Well, actually, we ourselves are not going to participate in elections under Avril. That is the Bloc's position. We are going to exert pressure to have the Haitian people show all these institutions that they will be going against the wishes of the sovereign people if they send people to support a de facto dictatorial government, which by suppressing Articles 150 and 142-2, is seeking to act like a dictatorial president for life. [end recording]

Meanwhile, the RDC [Christian Democratic Assembly], which was part of the Bloc, announces in a press release today [16 March] that it has left both the Democratic Bloc and the Coordinating Committee of the Democratic Forces.

The RDC took this decision following an incident between the RDC and the Coordinating Committee of the Democratic Forces that took place after the press conference. [passage omitted]

U.S. Position on Situation

FL1803161789 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Telephone interview with Fritz Longchamp, head of the Washington Office on Haiti, by unidentified reporter, date and place not specified]

[Excerpts] Fritz Longchamp, the director of the Washington-based Office on Haiti, says that he does not understand the manner in which the government has reinstated the Constitution of 1987. According to Mr Longchamp, General Avril thereby wants to set up, install, a military dictatorship in Haiti. According to Longchamp, the U.S. Congress might unblock money to help the election council organize future elections. However, the economic help the Americans give Haiti will actually be reestablished when a civilian government will have come out of democratic elections in Haiti. [passage omitted]

[Begin recording] [Longchamp] [Passage omitted] When I got back and sat down to talk to them, I realized that they were mostly interested in talking about elections, that they were planning for elections. [passage omitted]

In response to the 13 March decree, we put out a text, and we asked the committee to introduce the text into the [words indistinct] dossier, as an official document.

[Reporter] Can you tell us about the text that you of the Washington Office [on Haiti] introduced?

[Longchamp] It is a text that says that after (?examining) all the constitutional articles that have been suspended, we have reached the conclusion that this constitutes laying the foundations for creating a constitutional military dictatorship in Haiti. We don't think it has anything to do with the Haitian people's demand that the Constitution be restored. We think, rather, as I just said, that it is a maneuver aimed at giving a military dictatorship in Haiti a constitutional basis. Therefore, basing ourselves on this, we ask that the 13 March decree be rescinded—because it is not what the Haitian people have been asking for. [end recording]

Regarding the meeting the congressional subcommittee had on Haiti last 14 March, Longchamp thinks that the congress could unblock money to help the election council hold elections. However, economic aid might really be forthcoming only when there is a civilian government that has come out of a democratic election.

[Begin recording] [Longchamp] We must be very very careful, there. We must not forget that what is being discussed here is aid for 1990-91, not for 1989. [passage omitted] So we are talking about 1990-91. OK.

The only concrete proposal made was by the State Department, which said [rephrases] they asked for a response to [rephrases] they might make an effort to give the government some help every time the government takes a positive initiative. Not a lot, they said. They could give it in the form of a program that already existed under Jean-Claude Duvalier, PL-480, Title I—under which they sent wheat to Haiti that the Minoterie [the national flour mill] turned into flour, which the government sold. And with this money, the government could invest in sectors that would create jobs in Haiti, such as public works and that kind of thing.

They were clear about it not being a lot of money. It's a relatively small amount—some $30-25 million or so. But, as I said, only the State Department made this request.

When I consider everything that was said, what all the other people who provided testimony said, and what the congressmen said, I do not think that there is any ulterior motive.

What I feel is going to come out of all this is that they are going to give—going to vote—some money so that if there are elections in Haiti, and if those elections are held the way the U.S. Congress and Government would like, this money could be unblocked for that election council—so the council can hold elections.

However, they were clear about there being no aid to Haiti until Haiti has a democratically-elected civilian government. [end recording]

These democratic elections that Longchamp is talking about have a special meaning for the American authorities, who would rather go along with one of the candidates from the democratic center. The strategy of the Americans for the next elections is, according to Fritz Longchamp, to marginalize all extremes—that is to say, the totally Red communists and blue-denim-wearing-type Duvalierists [an allusion to the Tontons Macoutes, whose uniforms were made of blue denim].

[Begin recording] [Reporter] Are you sure that the democratic elections of which you speak don't have a different meaning in Washington circles?

[Longchamp] Well, I think your question is a logical one, because when I take into consideration what the State Department guy said... [rephrases] in his testimony, he said that the country was divided into three sectors: the extreme right, allegedly represented by the Duvalierists, the extreme left, and the democratic center in the middle. And he said that neither the extreme right nor the extreme left had any interest in things changing in Haiti. It seems that for them, the worse the situation is, the better it is for them because that is when their causes will advance. So, he said, the Avril government's only chance lies in working with the democratic center, in order for it to be able to fight these two extremes. Unfortunately, however, for the time being, the democratic center is disorganized, disunited. Thus, this makes it more difficult for the Avril government to really set up a democratic process in Haiti.

The other thing is that they said that at the forum, too, people from the extreme right and the extreme left participated.

So, when I put both these statements together, I see clearly that what they are saying is that there are certain people they would not like to see participate in elections in Haiti, and others whom they would indeed like to see participate—even if these people did not participate in the forum.

So, on this matter, like you said, perhaps the democratic elections they are talking about do not necessarily mean the same thing as what the Haitian people have gotten into their head.

Let me go a little further. What I mean is that I think that in the minds of these people here who are talking about the democratic process, there are certain people whom they would like to see become president—and others whom they would hate to see become president of Haiti.

[Reporter] You mentioned people who did not participate in the forum whom the Americans would be happy to see be a candidate, or be president of Haiti. Could such people have chosen not to participate in the forum out of demagogy? Or out of pure strategy? To show that they are against the government, and in order to create a base—to obtain popular support?

[Longchamp] I don't even need to answer that myself. The State Department guy, Ambassador Melton, has answered it. He said that indeed they think that certain people who did not participate in the forum did it in order to come across as populists, in order to be able to create a popular base, so that they could win more votes when elections came.

[Reporter] So, are you saying that the Americans are ready to support these people?

[Longchamp] Well, I think the answer is yes. However, let me explain that they talked about both those who participated in the forum and those who did not—indicating that they wouldn't have any problem with people among those they consider members of the democratic center who did not participate in the forum, whereas there are certain people who did participate in the forum whom they would not like to see running for office.

I think it is rather interesting to point out that although they say that people from the extreme right participated in the forum, they also say that the Duvalierists did not participate in the forum because they were not invited.

[Reporter] And how do you, as an observer following events in Washington, interpret this?

[Longchamp] Well, I think that there are two agendas under discussion here. There is the American agenda, which is defending its own interests, which would like to see things done in Haiti the way it would like, and, on the other hand, there are the interests of the Haitian people, which do not necessarily coincide with American interests. And I think that everyone should be well aware of this. And I think everyone should be vigilant, in order to avoid any manipulation. [end recording]

Demonstration in Cap-Haitien Dispersed by Army

FL1703170089 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] There was a demonstration in Cap Haitien yesterday against the high cost of living and insecurity. This demonstration was dispersed by the military. There were also some shots fired. Here is [correspondent] Jimmy Prophete's report.

[Prophete] Four people's organizations—APDN, People's Departmental Assembly of the North [Assemblee Populaire Departemental du Nord]; Falek, "Rise Up Haitian Women" [Fanm Ayisyen Leve-Kanpe]; AEN, Association of Students of Northern Haiti; and (Mackandal) [not further identified]—organized, on Wednesday, 15 March 1989, a demonstration to protest against the rising cost of living; the electricity crisis; insecurity; and, particularly, Bob Lecorps, Cap-Haitien's most infamous bandit, who has been waging an open campaign of aggression against local journalists since Friday, 3 March.

Surrounded by a group of fellow-candidates determined, armed, and ready to defend him, Bob Lecorps, wearing a black beret, stood in front of his house on Rue (16-BD). However, the Army prevented the demonstrators from going down that street, in order to avoid the confrontation which would otherwise have been inevitable.

The demonstration was almost over at around 1200 when a police detective began shooting at Jean Robert Lalanne, who is an APDN officer and one of the organizers of the demonstration. Lalanne barely missed being hit. Here is the testimony of Patrick Casimir.

[Begin Casimir recording, in Creole, in progress] ...thus, he [words indistinct] the demonstrators to not let them commit any aggression whatsoever, and also to not let anyone provoke them. [Words indistinct] demonstration at [name indistinct] square, as the organizations were talking—for each demonstration was talking—two detectives showed up on a motorcycle.

What did they do? As they aggravated and aggravated the people, the people began wanting to get them. Lalanne showed up and blocked their path. He told them: OK, calm down, calm down, calm down, calm down. The one driving the motorcycle (?stared at) Lalanne; and then pulled a container of gas out of his pocket and (?threw) it at the people. People began running every which way. However, the one outside [as heard], who is from Ouanaminthe, who knows Lalanne, and whom they had sent specifically, fired two bullets into the air. People scattered, and then he fired the third bullet directly at Lalanne.

Lalanne was not hit. (?I) was near him, and saw what happened. Lalanne was not hit.

Later, [words indistinct] sent them to provoke.

The Army came in and shot right into the ground—because these guys [rephrases] they [not further identified] sent (?them) to kill Lalanne. And then they would have used the pretext that the demonstrators had gone and shot two members of the Armed Forces, or two members of the Criminal Investigations Department. [end recording]

From Cap-Haitien, this is Jimmy Prophete, for Radio Metropole.

El Salvador

President Duarte's Health Reportedly Worsens

PA1703170189 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1615 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] San Salvador, 17 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—Dr Benjamin Interiano, the main doctor for Salvadoran President Jose Napoleon Duarte, has reported that the president's health has worsened. The doctor stated that Duarte came down with an intestinal infection and developed a high fever yesterday, adding that the new chemotherapy treatment was not applied because of Duarte's condition.

The doctor told ACAN-EFE today that Duarte had awakened yesterday "with fever and diarrhea caused by a strong intestinal infection," which was checked when they gave him a high dose of antibiotics.

Interiano explained the amount of antibiotics given to the president will delay his new chemotherapy treatment "3 to 4 days."

On 14 March, the doctors attending Duarte had announced that during this week the president would receive the fifth chemotherapy treatment for his liver cancer.

Interiano added that, after receiving the antibiotic treatment, Duarte was "better" this morning and was even able to go to the presidential palace.

Sources close to the president have stated that his health has gotten worse in past days as his liver cancer is growing. These sources expressed concern over the possibility that Duarte's liver will cease functioning.

'Responding Well' to Treatment

PA1903004089 San Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 18 Mar 89 pp 4, 28

[Text] The day before the elections, Salvadoran President Jose Napoleon Duarte has been struck by gastroenteritis, his family doctor Jose Luis Saca has reported. The doctor told reporters: "The president suffers from acute infectious gastroenteritis."

This illness, which according to medical sources is marked by severe diarrhea with mucus formed by leukocytes—whose presence indicates an infection—is dangerous because of the resulting dehydration and loss of mineral salts it causes. Saca added, however, that Duarte is responding well to treatment.

Although Saca did not report whether the diarrhea was caused by the chemotherapy that Duarte has received periodically as a treatment for his stomach and liver cancer, the doctor said the president's condition "does not at all appear to be serious, but he must stay in bed and have complete rest."

Saca said the president is being given antibiotics "both in tablets and intravenously."

Duarte is scheduled to leave the presidential palace to his successor on 1 June.

Vides Casanova on Measures To Counter Boycott

PA1703130089 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0352 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Defense Minister General Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova today urged the population to vote in the 19 March elections despite the risks posed by the guerrilla boycott.

Vides Casanova said the Army is ready and has implemented military measures to counter the boycott against the 19 March elections, in which 1.8 million Salvadorans will elect the successor to Christian Democratic President Jose Napoleon Duarte.

Vides Casanova admitted that the rebel boycott will reduce the number of voters and that this measure will affect all political parties in the same degree. He stressed that the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] wants to discredit the democratic process and capitalize on the number of null votes and abstentions.

Vides Casanova noted elections will take place 19 March in 240 Salvadoran municipalities but that there are (?22) towns, particularly in the northern and eastern region, where voting will not take place because they are in very dangerous areas.

Vides Casanova said that despite guerrilla terrorist activities the Army continues to respect the cease-fire declared on 28 February to support President Duarte's peace proposal.

No Voting in 'at Least 22 Towns'

PA1703230389 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2135 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] San Salvador, 17 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—In at least 22 towns in war zones in the northern and eastern parts of El Salvador, there will be no presidential elections on Sunday, a source at the Central Electoral Council (CCE) announced today.

A CCE spokesman said that residents of these towns will have the option of traveling to nearby towns or to their departmental capitals to vote.

He added that several of these towns, most of which are located in the northern and eastern sections of the country—where there is a greater guerrilla presence—are not densely populated or the residents did not obtain the identification cards required to vote.

Meanwhile, the CCE is having difficulties in at least 11 other towns in the eastern part of the country because individuals in charge of organizing the elections in those areas have resigned from their posts as a result of guerrilla threats.

In El Transito, San Jorge, San Rafael Oriente, and other towns, election board members have publicly resigned from their posts.

The CCE said that in an effort to solve this difficult problem representatives from other areas will be sent to these towns, thus guaranteeing that the people will be able to vote.

Salvadoran Defense Minister General Eugenio Vides Casanova has said the Army is prepared to protect the country's 262 municipalities so the people can vote. Vides added, however, that the Army and the CCE have determined that no elections will be held in these 22 towns since large numbers of "military and civilian personnel" needed to patrol other voting places would be kept busy in these towns if elections were held there.

Of the towns where the voting centers will be closed, 8 are located in Morazan, 2 in San Miguel, and 12 in Chalatenango.

On Sunday, 1.8 million Salvadorans will elect the president who will replace Christian Democrat Jose Napoleon Duarte.

Salvadoran guerrillas have increased sabotage against high-tension power lines and have paralyzed almost all transportation in an effort to hamper the elections, which the rebels have described as "fraudulent and illegal."

New Clandestine Group Threatens FMLN-FDR

PA1803024389 San Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 17 Mar 89 pp 3, 45

[Text] A new clandestine organization, the self-styled "Democratic Defense Commandos" [Comandos de la Defensa Democratica], yesterday threatened to give FMLN-FDR members the same treatment it gave to Dr Francisco Pecorini, referring to the assassination of Pecorini and to other terrorist attacks on persons and installations.

The statement was issued in a recording, which was left at an undisclosed location in San Salvador, that identified the new group as having an "anticommunist" orientation.

The voice said that "given the acts of sabotage carried out by the FMLN-FDR and the mass organizations, and the fact that they harm the noncombatant civilian and military population, our political-military organization will carry out similar actions."

"In case a noncombatant civilian or military member is assassinated—as in the case of Miguel Castellanos and Dr Francisco Pecorini—we will respond with the execution of FMLN collaborators or allies, including leaders of the UNTS [National Union of Salvadoran Workers], National University, and other similar groups."

"Likewise, for each sabotage action carried out against public services and offices, private enterprises, and private homes, we will respond with sabotage actions against the offices of groups affiliated with the UNTS and National University and against the homes of FMLN allies."

The spokesperson also stated: "The FMLN organizations and members who have partially joined the democratic process through the CD and UDN [Nationalist Democratic Union] will not become military targets for our organization because they are persons who can serve as liaisons with the FMLN at any given moment."

Assembly Overrides Duarte Veto on Electoral Law

PA1803013089 San Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 17 Mar 89 p 8

[Text] The Legislative Assembly approved with 43 votes the Legislation and Constitutional Points Commission's ruling which confirms the reforms to the Electoral Code and overrides the veto that President Duarte sent yesterday to the plenary session.

President Duarte tried to keep an old law that put the PDC-PCN [Christian Democratic Party-National Conciliation Party] alliance in an advantageous position at the Central Electoral Council since it granted maximum power to the council's Christian Democratic president.

According to statements from the ARENA [National Republican Alliance] and Authentic Christian Movement representatives, a two-to-one system is still being used, whereby the PDC and PCN delegates' decisions prevail over the final outcome of the Central Electoral Council deliberations, which should be impartial.

Chalatenango Mayor Resigns, Flees Country

PA1803013589 San Salvador EL MUNDO in Spanish 16 Mar 89 p 11

[Excerpt] Chalatenango, 16 Mar—The mayor of Chalatenango, 42-year-old Ernesto Avelar, abandoned his post and fled the country with his family as a result of guerrilla threats, it was reported today by the official's relatives.

Avelar, a member of ARENA, had been threatened by the FMLN and had received five warnings within the last month. The last warning, received on Sunday, said that the guerrillas were giving him 24 hours to resign from his post.

It was confirmed today that Avelar had definitely resigned his municipal post and left for Costa Rica with his wife and two children.

The area's municipal offices will remain closed until the situation resulting from the mayor's resignation is cleared up. There are no reports that other municipal officials have resigned. [passage omitted]

Human Rights Leader Criticizes Elections

PA1703230289 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2100 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Pamplona, Spain, 17 Mar (EFE)—Celia Medrano, president of the Salvadoran Human Rights Commission [CDHES], today said that the presidential elections to be held in her country on Sunday "are not legitimate or democratic."

Medrano made these statements in Pamplona, in northern Spain. Medrano is on a visit to Spain following her trip to the UN headquarters in Geneva, where she attended a meeting on Salvadoran human rights.

The nongovernmental CDHES that Celia Medrano heads is an organization that supports a negotiation between the parties in conflict to find a solution to the war in that Central American country.

"Whatever the results of Sunday's elections, these will not be legal because the elections are not democratic; they deny peace and work against the democratic process," Celia Medrano said.

The CDHES president pointed out that the elections are being held within a climate marked by 1,889 political murders in 1988 and the existence of five "death squads."

Medrano explained that this is why "the outcome of the elections will not be the result of the people's will or reflect democracy."

Medrano added that the proposal made by the FMLN to postpone the elections for 6 months "makes sense" and "would allow the election process to be transformed into an instrument for peace," because under those conditions, the "FMLN promised to respect the election results."

Regarding the election results, Medrano said that it looks like the ARENA will win. She said that this is the party "behind the death squads, which means that if that party wins, repression and violence will increase."

Medrano added that the "members of the death squads are part of the rank and file of the Armed Forces and therefore it is necessary to begin denouncing the government's positions, because in El Salvador human rights are not being respected, nor is there a process of democratization."

Celia Medrano also stressed that "international cooperation is needed" and that the "Spanish Government can help a lot, even though it is the Salvadoran people who must determine their own destiny."

Rebel Radio on U.S. Embassy Election 'Plan'

PA1603051189 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0000 GMT 15 Mar 89

[Unattributed commentary: "The Yankee Embassy and the Election Campaign"]

[Text] National Union of Salvadoran Workers, UNTS, sources in the past few hours reported a Yankee embassy plan to commit fraud in support of the PDC during the 19 March elections. Several Salvadoran Armed Forces officers would be involved in this fraud.

This report has surprised no one because for several months [U.S. Ambassador] William Walker and his government have been backing a campaign to bring their candidate Fidel Chavez Mena to the Presidency.

Since the FMLN presented its peace proposal, the Yankees have appeared to act cautiously. They even convinced Jose Napoleon Duarte to change his initial no into a more moderate position. They then pulled a counterproposal from their hat, so to speak, forcing the Armed Forces to decree a unilateral cease-fire. As in every other election fraud, they brought up the case of Msgr Romero in an effort to attack the ARENA. They have now played another card in the election gamble and reportedly cleared up the murder of 10 San Sebastian peasants, but failed to chastise the biggest culprit, Colonel Chavez Caceres.

It is not at all surprising that they try to pose as respecters of human rights now that the country is in the middle of an election campaign. The Yankee embassy, however, has never, in all these years, cared to clear up the murders of more than 60,000 Salvadorans.

Walker is not concerned about human rights violations in El Salvador but ARENA's likely victory in the coming elections, which they want to avoid at any cost.

Transport, Electricity Situation Updated

Red Cross Reports Attack

PA1803013389 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 0029 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] San Salvador, 17 Mar (DPA)—San Salvador and other important cities throughout the interior have begun their second night without electricity as a result of sabotage against the country's power supply. The sabotage action is part of the rebel campaign to prevent a massive voter turnout for Sunday's presidential elections.

By night San Salvador, where the effects of the outage are felt the strongest, gives the impression of a city under martial law or a city where a curfew has been imposed. Very few lights can be seen and these are located in upper class areas, where hospitals and medical clinics are also located.

Throughout the rest of the capital there is no power or water, and this is causing the residents to worry, especially the businessmen who have suffered heavy losses during the 2 days during which sabotage has damaged the transportation sector and gas stations.

Drivers are having trouble getting fuel, and some businesses—those located near garrisons or areas under heavy military protection—have dared to defy the FMLN's warning. However, long lines of cars can be seen at those gas stations that are selling fuel. One gets the impression that this is a country that has recently experienced a natural disaster or in which the sale of fuel is restricted.

Related to the sabotage against the transportation sector, today at noon the Salvadoran Red Cross reported that one of its ambulances, transporting a patient to a medical center, was machinegunned. The Red Cross blamed no one but warned the parties in conflict, the rebels and the government, to respect the vehicles that belong to the Red Cross. They said that their ambulances can be easily identified because they have sirens and colored lights that are only used by that organization.

The 2d day of the FMLN-decreed transportation stoppage has been the most effective so far during the war. Buses circulate through the San Salvador streets now and then with three or four soldiers aboard. There are also military trucks that serve the regular routes.

In the past few hours, the Army has increased the number of camouflaged soldiers patrolling the streets. Leftists, however, avoid these patrols and shout slogans against the elections, dropping leaflets from vehicles with slogans like these: "Drivers: Do not risk your life—stay at home during the stoppage, FMLN;" and "Bus, truck, microbus drivers: Support the transportation stoppage."

The stoppage will complete its 3d day on Saturday. If it continues on Sunday, it would be the longest so far, because these stoppages have always lasted from 1 to 3 days before. The leftist parties participating in the political campaign have told the guerrillas that the stoppage will affect only the parties composed of the humble and not the rich and millionaires.

As for casualties during this stoppage, a bus was machinegunned in San Vicente, approximately 52 km east of San Salvador, where a minor was killed because the driver ignored a rebel roadblock and the vehicle was fired upon when the driver tried to flee.

Army Blamed for Ambulance Attack

PA1703233289 (Clandestine) Radio Farabundo Marti in Spanish to El Salvador 2303 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Salvadoran people, foreign and local media: It was reported that an ambulance was machinegunned in the early morning of 17 March in the area of Ilopango. It has been publicly confirmed that at least two people have been wounded. We hereby blame [Defense Minister General Carlos Eugenio] Vides Casanova's troops for this irresponsible action.

We remind our local and international public that the government's Armed Forces have traditionally engaged in this kind of repressive and abusive action. Vides Casanova's rank and file is nervous and upset. For this reason, these troops have engaged in such widespread actions of cowardice as throwing grenades at bus stops, machinegunning vehicles indiscriminately, and harassing civilians.

We warn rescue teams and the population in general to take any necessary measures. We also make Vides Casanova responsible for any other action similar to that which took place this morning in Ilopango.

Rebels Reportedly Not To Attack Voters

PA1703175089 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1600 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] San Salvador, 17 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—University Rector Ignacio Ellacuria, who recently met with several Salvadoran rebel commanders, said today that the Salvadoran guerrillas asserted that polling places will not be considered "military targets" during the 19 March elections.

Ellacuria, rector of the San Salvador Central American University, met with Commander Joaquin Villalobos of the FMLN in Managua on 6 March. Ellacuria said Villalobos guaranteed that "neither voters nor polling places will be attacked on election day."

Several guerrilla leaders gave the same guarantee to Guillermo Ungo, presidential candidate of the left-wing CD, who also met with FMLN commanders in Managua recently.

That assurance by rebel commanders, which was confirmed by other sources, contradicts the announcement released by the so-called Anastacio Aquino Command yesterday in San Salvador, according to which local electoral boards will be considered "military targets." An Anastacio Aquino Command spokesman told a local radio station that "those who go out to vote—knowing that our units will attack polling places—will do so at their own risk."

The increasing appearance of those kinds of "urban commandos" is considered "the main concern" of those who are negotiating with the guerrilla movement.

A close collaborator of Salvadoran President Jose Napoleon Duarte told ACAN-EFE that "this whole thing can end up like the Shining Path" (referring to the indiscriminate violence unleashed by the Peruvian guerrilla movement).

Experts on guerrilla movements and their structures reject the theory that the urban commandos can act without consulting the FMLN Command. These experts note that the commandos operate under the so-called Metropolitan Front, which was created to operate in San Salvador under the direction of the FMLN commanders. According to those experts, most of the commandos operating in and around San Salvador are part of the Peoples' Revolutionary Army, one of the five groups making up the FMLN, whose leader is Joaquin Villalobos.

In its official statement on 10 March, the FMLN said it will block the elections through a public transportation stoppage, which began on 16 March and has virtually paralyzed the country, and through death threats against election officials. That statement, however, did not say whether the FMLN will prevent people from voting through military actions.

In view of the confusion created by the disparity in the guerrilla statements, experts are discussing why Fransico Peccorini, a well-known right-wing intellectual, was murdered in San Salvador on 15 March. No one has claimed responsibility for the murder.

The threats of revenge made by the self-styled Democratic Defense Commandos immediately after Pecorini's murder prompted political leaders to foresee an increase of indiscriminate death squad violence. Death squads murdered thousands in El Salvador in the early 1980's. An increase in indiscriminate violence would intensify the 8-year war and could torpedo the peace negotiations that the political parties and the guerrilla movement started a few weeks ago.

The blatant FMLN attacks on the election process has surprised those who participated in the recent talks with the guerrillas and has spread the theory that the rebels want the ARENA, El Salvador's most radical right-wing party, to win the elections. Another guerrilla goal could be appearing as the true winners of the elections if their actions cause a high rate of absenteeism. After the elections, the FMLN would say that absenteeism is tantamount to votes for the rebels.

Preelection Media Restrictions Criticized

PA1803005289 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0018 GMT 18 Mar 89

["Press bulletin" from the FMLN; date and place not given]

[Text] After the Armed Forces High Command, the PDC, and ARENA definitively precluded the possibility of holding the Salvadoran elections peacefully and imposed the fraudulent and illegitimate 19 March elections, many of the people's organizations justly stated that they reject the elections and decided to issue a call for the people to abstain from voting or to cast a null and void ballot.

The FMLN believes that this is a legitimate right, that the groups representing the Salvadoran people have the right to oppose an event manipulated to extend the war. Their demands to abstain from voting or to cast a null and void ballot are reasonable and just.

Attorney General Roberto Garcia Alvarado has threatened the Salvadoran news media, warning them that they must not publicize any communique which conveys the people's repudiation of the 19 March fraud, thus imposing a gag law on the Salvadoran news media. The death squads' lawyer now represses the news media. The FMLN states that it does not recognize Roberto Garcia Alvarado's authority and urges him to abstain from repressing the news media.

FMLN Leader Comments on Election 'Fraud'

PA1803042489 Havana International Service in Spanish 0045 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Interview with FMLN Directorate member Jorge Shafik Handal by Estrella Diaz; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Diaz] Presidential elections will be held in El Salvador next Sunday. Jorge Shafik Handal, a member of the FMLN Directorate, talks about the upcoming elections, particularly about the fraud that is expected:

[Shafik Handal] The elections are part of the counterinsurgency plan, above all because the contest over who will win is only between the ARENA and the PDC candidates. I might add that the elections simply represent a competition between the PDC and ARENA over which can best perpetrate a fraud. These two parties are the only ones—considering the other participating parties—that really have the tools to perpetrate a fraud. The fraud... [changes thought] ARENA is preparing its fraud based on reforms to the electoral code, which it was able to achieve through its majority in the Legislative Assembly. Thus, the voting tables have become ARENA's first and only resort, because its possibilities of winning... [changes thought] Its supporters represent a minority and the polls show that most of the people have not defined their their positions, or that they will reject the elections by not voting.

Rebels Order 'Intensification' of Operations

PA1803022389 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0122 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Communique issued by the FMLN General Command on 17 March; place not given]

[Text] The FMLN has decided to combine the people's rejection of the 19 March elections with an intensification of actions throughout the nation. This includes the nationwide transportation stoppage, which we now declare to be indefinite.

The rejection of the 19 March elections by our people and the impact of our actions have led the regime to launch a campaign of disinformation, aggression, and threats against the civilian population in a bid to confuse the population and, in addition, to set the stage for an electoral fraud.

In order to make matters clear to our people as well as to the local and international press, we report the following:

1. The gagging of the national press is part of the plan to cover up the fraud that will be committed on 19 March. In addition, the control over the media is intended to attribute terrorist actions to the FMLN.

2. The regime has tried to blame us for a number of actions, such as the attack on a Red Cross ambulance, among others, for the same purpose. The FMLN has a definite policy of not harming the civilian population. The hurling of grenades at bus stops is a common practice of Army personnel and it is therefore preposterous to blame the FMLN.

3. A number of false communiques with an obvious terrorist tone have appeared. They clumsily glorify violence and threaten the press in terms that are quite unlike those appearing in documents in which we outline (?our) official positions. We emphatically state that the FMLN has in no way or at any time threatened the press or the citizens. We recall the fact that our official communiques are signed by our General Command and broadcast through our stations.

We reiterate that the fundamental thing at this time is to reinforce and expand unity in the search for peace through every possible means. The struggle which we are waging with weapons in hand is aimed at an Army that has once more denied to our nation the possibility of finding a formula for a negotiated solution at an important crossroads in the nation's history.

(?We made) a proposal to hold free elections, in peace and for peace, but the Army stubbornly insists on holding fraudulent elections, at war and for war. Consequently, the elections will be held during war.
[Signed] FMLN General Command
17 March 1989

Ungo Criticizes ARENA on Voting Centers

PA1803052889 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Report by Mauricio Funes]

[Text] The CD candidates today went to the Central Elections Council [CCE] to ask that the voting centers that were already announced be retained. They also rejected ARENA's request for a return to traditional centers.

According to [CD presidential candidate] Guillermo Ungo, ARENA's request to return to the traditional voting centers and to reduce their number is not practical because the CCE has installed the voting centers in the most densely populated areas in order to make it easier for the voters to reach the balloting centers.

[Begin recording] [Ungo] We think this is in line with a position held by ARENA, for which a high voter turnout would not be advisable. (?To my knowledge), they can only win if the vote count is low. They have already reduced the voting population through the amendments to the code. (?They managed) to get the voter lists delivered after 15 February, and you will notice that by doing so, in San Salvador, voters will have more trouble getting to the voting centers.

So, this is the point we are raising—that the CCE's decision be upheld. ARENA is represented in it. (?The CCE is the top electoral body) in accordance with the Constitution [words indistinct]. We feel that ARENA invokes the Constitution when it suits it (?and wants to do as it pleases) against the law.

[Reporter] The ARENA leadership said yesterday that the change in the voting places may lead the political parties, and particularly ARENA, to receive a low number of votes, which would make it obligatory to hold a runoff election.

[Ungo] [Words indistinct] the opposite. They know they have a low number of electors, that their number of constituents has not increased. For that reason they have [words indistinct]. However, the actual fact is that [passage indistinct]. [end recording]

Ungo said that he backed the CCE's decision, particularly because it made it possible to lessen the impact of the transportation stoppage ordered by the FMLN. In addition, he praised the announcement made in Mexico by the guerrillas, who said that they will not attack the voters and voting centers on Sunday.

FMLN Leader Admits 'Differences' With Ungo

PA1803152489 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1413 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Mexico City, 18 Mar (DPA)—The Salvadoran guerrillas today acknowledged the existence of "tactical differences" with their ally Guillermo Ungo, leader of the Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR). These differences stem from Ungo's decision to participate in tomorrow's elections despite the rebel boycott.

In statements to DPA, FMLN Commander Ana Guadalupe Martinez said the differences are "temporary" and will most likely be resolved when the political outcome of the elections is assessed.

The rebel leader also said that if the total of abstentions, void ballots, and votes for Guillermo Ungo is more than the number of votes for the winner of the elections, the FMLN will request the annulment of the elections and the holding of new elections based on the proposal the rebels presented at the recent negotiations in Oaxtepec, Mexico.

Martinez, who is a member of the FMLN-FDR Political-Diplomatic Commission, attributed the position of the CD member parties—the Social Democratic coalition that nominated Ungo—to the CD's need to preserve the coalition's legal status.

Under the electoral laws, parties that fail to participate in two consecutive elections lose their legal status. This would apply to Ungo's National Revolutionary Movement, the Social Democratic Party, and the Social Christian People's Movement, which make up the CD, because they did not participate in the last legislative elections. In this regard, Martinez said, the FMLN "understands and respects" the decision by Ungo and his supporters to go to the polls, although she feels that "Sunday's elections will not bring peace but will prolong the war."

The rebel leader feels that the guerrilla boycott of the elections will not affect the CD or the conservative ARENA, because they both have a solid ideological and political constituency.

However, she said, the boycott will affect the PDC, whose social base is "much weaker." Martinez said the PDC was "punished" during the Legislative Assembly elections. "Those who voted against the PDC in the legislative elections will now abstain," she said.

Regarding the FMLN's post-electoral strategy, she said that will depend on the results. "If there is a winner in the first round, we are prepared to negotiate peace," she said, stressing that a possible negotiation entails the acceptance of the conditions outlined by the FMLN during the Oaxtepec meeting. At that meeting, the guerrillas asked that those responsible for war crimes be tried, that all repressive organizations controlled by the military be dismantled, and that the number of soldiers be reduced.

Referring to the possibility of the rebels calling for new elections, she said a high absentee rate, together with void ballots and the votes Ungo may get, could foster "an important movement in favor of votes for peace."

For the FMLN, which unsuccessfully tried to delay tomorrow's elections by 6 months, that would be "the best election result," Martinez noted. The worst and "more complex one," she added, would be victory for the PDC, because that would encourage the "warmongers."

As for the U.S. Administration's role, Martinez said President Bush "is waiting for the election results, as we are." She admitted that although the Bush administration—which prefers the PDC—considers ARENA an undesirable ally, "the U.S. Government is prepared for an ARENA victory."

Foreign Minister on ARENA 'Arrogance'

PA1803041489 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0307 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Report by Marco Antonio Guevara]

[Text] Salvadoran Foreign Affairs Minister Ricardo Acevedo Peralta today rejected public statements by [ARENA candidate] Alfredo Cristiani charging that the Foreign Ministry is planning to hamper the mobility of those observing the elections.

[Begin Acevedo recording] Quite the contrary. My interest as a Christian Democrat is that the observers witness the elections so that they will realize that if any problems or difficulties arise, they probably result from the persistent arrogance of the ARENA representatives supervising the ballot boxes. I want to stress that had it not been for ARENA's inflexible and irresponsible attitude and its refusal to give peace a chance by not speaking to the FMLN, we would not be in this situation today.

We must remind all Salvadorans that the country's current situation is the result of ARENA's thoughtless, arrogant, and irresponsible attitude. By refusing to hold a dialogue, ARENA destroyed any possibility of dialogue with the FMLN and did away with the possibility of postponing the elections and thus of having the elections take place in a climate of peace. [end recording]

There will be between 200 and 250 observers in El Salvador on Sunday to monitor the elections. The Foreign Affairs Ministry has organized six routes to allow the observers to monitor the elections throughout the country. The Foreign Ministry, through the CAO-6 Commission, or the Commission Assisting Observers [Comision de Atender a Observadorers], is planning to give the observers visiting our country very special attention.

Zamora, Ungo on Election 'Irregularities'

PA1803233689 San Salvador Radio Cadena Sonora in Spanish 1700 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Remarks by CD leaders Ruben Zamora and Guillermo Manuel Ungo on 18 March; place not given—recorded]

[Text] The CD today charged that unregistered organizations are violating the Electoral Code by waging a campaign against that leftist political coalition when the law bans any kind of political campaign activity 3 days prior to the elections. CD Coordinator General Ruben

Zamora said that paid ads are being issued through some news media against his political coalition in violation of the guidelines of the Central Electoral Council [CCE].

[Begin Zamora recording] We want to denounce a campaign that is currently being waged against the CD, even though the law bans political campaigns at this time. You can read in today's editions of LA PRENSA GRAFICA and in EL DIARIO DE HOY paid ads directly and clearly attacking the CD. This violates the law. Communiques of this sort from unknown movements were also broadcast this morning on the country's radio stations, such as Radio Cadena YSU and Radio Cadena YSKL. Moreover, we also regard as equally serious the fact that one of the voting places—the one on Roosevelt Drive—was covered with lots of posters this morning. This is one of the posters, and you can clearly see the direct attack on the CD. It shows a photograph of our presidential candidate Guillermo Manuel Ungo and says that the CD is destruction, poverty, and so on.

These posters were posted last night on Roosevelt Drive. Considering the fact that there is currently a transportation stoppage in effect and the extent of the military control over San Salvador, the CD is holding the Salvadoran Army directly responsible for putting up these posters against the CD. We feel that if the Salvadoran Army is a political party, it should register as such. However, it should not be taking advantage of the period in which political parties cannot conduct a political campaign for this sort of thing.

Army personnel are not the guarantors of the elections process. Instead, they are violating election laws. In addition, we want to denounce attempts to confuse the Salvadoran public in an effort to hamper the voting on Sunday. Specifically, we want to show you this copy of today's El DIARIO DE HOY—though it has Sunday's date, because, as you know, Sunday's newspapers are published here on Saturday. This issue lists the number of voting places all over the country. Although there are seven voting places in San Salvador, EL DIARIO DE HOY only lists six. It has omitted one voting place, as you can clearly see—namely, the Technical and Industrial Institute. Instead, it has assigned all voters with last names that begin with the letters A, B, C, D, and E to the Roosevelt Drive voting place.

According to the CCE, all people whose last names begin with the letters A or B have to vote at the Technical and Industrial Institute. EL DIARIO DE HOY's edition has omitted this. We regard this as highly suspicious since we know this newspaper has always campaigned for ARENA and since we know ARENA has worked to reduce the number of voting centers. Voters will no doubt be very confused tomorrow.

In conclusion, the CD wants to denounce an irregular situation in Usulutan Department, where the Army has taken upon itself the right to change the voting place in Santiago de Maria. Although our delegates—as well as the delegates from other parties—oppose changes in the voting places unless authorized by the CCE—as the law requires—Colonel Ramirez, whom the Army appointed to handle the logistics of the CCE, is determined to change the location of that voting center. He claims the Army has the right to move voting centers.

These factors prompt the CD to warn the Salvadoran and international public that the honesty of this electoral process, which already has been questioned a great deal, is now coming under much greater scrutiny as a result of factors we are bringing to the public's attention. [end recording]

These were statements made by Ruben Zamora regarding what he termed the irregular situation affecting the CD. In addition, CD presidential candidate Guillermo Manuel Ungo said a petition has been filed with the CCE urging it to act in accordance with the law.

[Begin Ungo recording] The CD has sent a document to the CCE pointing out these irregularities and violations of the law and asking it to apply the requisite sanctions. The CCE, in effect, has published paid ads in the media urging compliance with the law and warning against violations. The CD, however, has no knowledge of any specific action adopted by the CCE to punish or prevent violations. On the contrary, [words indistinct] since we had to discontinue our election campaigns, and phantom organizations and institutions have been waging an election campaign against the CD. [end recording]

The members of the CD have thus expressed their views regarding a series of irregularities that, besides harming their political coalition, violate the electoral laws.

To conclude, they expressed the hope that the CCE would enforce its decrees and apply the requisite sanctions against those who violate the electoral laws.

Effects of Transport Stoppage Reported 18 Mar

PA1803212289 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSU in Spanish 1200 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] On the eve of the presidential elections, more than 80 percent of the public transportation in San Salvador is paralyzed while a majority of the residents are not receiving potable water or electric power.

Reports arriving this morning from the outskirts of the capital state that cities such as Mejicanos, San Marcos, Apopa, (Isustepeque), and Delgado, among others, have not received basic public services for the past 3 days.

The National Police this morning reported that public transportation in San Salvador has been more than 80 percent halted for the 3d day in a row and only certain minibuses and light cargo vehicles are serving certain routes.

Workers at the eastern and western bus terminals of this capital report that the transportation situation is similar to yesterday's. No buses have arrived or departed San Salvador for the country's 13 departments.

Much Central American commercial transportation is also paralyzed by the transportation stoppage in El Salvador since many railroad boxcars are being held up at the Salvadoran borders, unable to enter the national territory.

Meanwhile, at least two bombs placed near electric power poles were detonated this morning in San Salvador. One was placed at 16 West Street in the (Ivu) neighborhood, in the southern area of the capital, and a fragmentation grenade exploded near the Santa Isabel neighborhood. A telephone junction box, the exact location of which has not yet been determined, was also destroyed.

Military security has been stepped up throughout this capital and its outskirts only 24 hours before presidential elections. Official sources this morning reported that Armed Forces troops are mainly patrolling San Salvador gas stations, since FMLN urban commands have threatened to destroy them.

It was also reported that Salvadoran Air Force helicopters are overflying the capital to protect vehicles that are transiting the main streets of San Salvador, despite the transportation stoppage decreed by the insurgency 3 days ago. Reports also state that the National and Treasury Police are offering free transportation to people heading for their respective workplaces.

The Army is using loudspeakers on military vehicles to urge the people to vote in presidential elections tomorrow. For Sunday's elections, the Army will deploy a large number of units to transport voters, who will be going to their respective polling places throughout the country.

In the Salvadoran capital, police-military security has been stepped up less than 24 hours before the 1989 presidential elections. We have noticed a larger number of security personnel near the seven voting centers set up by the Central Electoral Council in San Salvador Municipality.

In the outlying cities of northern San Salvador, such as Mexicanos, Cuscatancingo, and Apopa, transportation is still completely paralyzed in the wake of the ground transportation stoppage decreed by the FMLN, which is in its 3d day today.

Meanwhile, reports from Chalatenango, 72 km north of San Salvador, state that the entire department is without electricity due to rationing that the CEL [Lempa River Hydroelectric Executive Commission] has imposed on the entire country after FMLN guerrillas carried out large-scale sabotage operations against the electricity network early this week.

Military sources consulted this morning in Chalatenango said that there have been no clashes between military forces and guerrillas in that area for the past few hours. These sources said that the voting booths that will be installed in 33 municipalities of that northern department are ready. They added that the number of military units in that area of the country has been increased.

Stoppage To Continue After 19 Mar

PA1803233289 (Clandestine) Radio Farabundo Marti in Spanish to El Salvador 2302 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Communique issued by the FMLN on 18 March; place not given]

[Text] The FMLN informs the national and international media, all transportation workers, and our people of the following:

1. The national transportation stoppage will continue for an indefinite period after 19 March.

2. Tomorrow, 19 March, our units have been ordered to enforce this instruction to the letter. Consequently, we are asking all transportation workers and drivers not to circulate for any reason.

3. We also issue a call not to pay attention to rumors and false communiques about a suspension of this stoppage, which can only be announced through our stations.

Therefore, the media must not be caught by surprise or deceived, because this disinformation from the top command is placing drivers at great risk.

Bombs Wound Five at San Salvador Market

PA1803201989 San Salvador Radio Cadena Sonora in Spanish 1700 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] We are going to give you a report on something that happened a few minutes ago in the center of San Salvador. We have on the telephone a listener who is going to tell us about two explosions just before noon that left at least five persons wounded. Please go ahead with the report.

[Listener] Sonora listeners, this is a last-minute report. Just a few minutes ago, at 1130, two bombs exploded here at the eastern end of the central market. Five persons were seriously wounded in this terrorist attack. They were just taken to the Rosales Hospital. The wounded include a child and a woman. We did not get their names because the authorities did not let us do so. Red Cross personnel took the wounded to Rosales Hospital.

The people around here are very frightened and are running around. The people were buying food when the explosions occurred. They are nervous and are trying to quickly find transportation. The explosions were heard far from here. At the market's eastern gate, where the

fruit stands are located, we were told by passersby that a man working there was the most seriously wounded by the bombs. All the wounded were taken to the hospital.

The terrorists left a communique that was immediately picked up by the National Police.

The people are fleeing the market. They cannot continue shopping because it is assumed this was a warning to keep the people from going out or going to vote.
rrorist Actions'

PA1903013789 (Clandestine) Radio Farabundo Marti in Spanish to El Salvador 2325 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Our people's rejection of the 19 March elections and the impact of our actions have led the regime to conduct a campaign of disinformation, aggression, and threats against civilians. The government and Armed Forces top command policy entails dirty war actions against the Salvadoran people.

A Salvadoran Red Cross ambulance was attacked in Tuyapa neighborhood, Soyapango municipality, early on 17 March. On that same day, a grenade was hurled at a commercial minibus. This occurred near the (?Donruda) church.

Also on 17 March, it was reported that a former soldier in [name indistinct] neighborhood, San Miguel Department, hurled a grenade into a brewery, wounding two persons and killing another.

On the same day, in the (Gaviria) neighborhood of San Miguel, the National Guard murdered Juan Antonio Mendez, a journalism student and Red Cross member. In a hypocritical manner, the 3d Brigade tried to make it appear that he was killed while attempting to dynamite an electric power pole.

On 13 March, another individual threw a grenade at a bus stop from a moving vehicle. This occurred near the Metrocentro building [in San Salvador], wounding five people.

It was also reported on 13 March that Isabel Lobo, an 11-year old girl, died when troops detonated a mine near her home. This occurred in Castano village, Culepa, San Miguel Department. The townspeople reported this.

We blame the top command for all these terrorist actions. The top command is ordering commanders and troops to act in this repressive manner.

U.S. Coup Plans, Army-PDC Alliance Alleged

PA1903012089 (Clandestine) Radio Farabundo Marti in Spanish to El Salvador 0008 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Communique issued by the FMLN on 18 March 1989]

[Text] The FMLN, to prove that the 19 March elections will be fraudulent, hereby reports the following intelligence reports received within the past few hours.

1. The PDC's political committee was reluctant to hold the 19 March elections since surveys indicated that the party would lose. Among other things, this outlook led them to propose a delay in the elections until 30 April.

2. The U.S. Government, concerned over the PDC's imminent defeat, decided that a coup should be staged on 15 March; however, after running into resistance from several officers, it suspended the plan and decided to implement it after 19 March if no party receives a majority or if the PDC loses the election in the first round.

3. The PDC political committee has decided that, whatever the outcome of the 19 March elections, the party will proclaim victory at 2000 on election day to make sure that it has a head start on ARENA. The PDC will also stage demonstrations in San Salvador after the elections. If ARENA claims victory, the PDC will take over the Central Electoral Council to alter the election results.

4. Meetings of military officers, chaired by Colonels Vargas, Canjura, Montano, and Ponce, were held in the eastern and central regions of the country. At these meetings the following conclusions were reached:
A. The Army, pressured by the United States, decided to support the PDC directly.
B. The Army decided to campaign for the PDC on election day, even if some officers object.
C. At the entrances to towns, soldiers will pressure voters to vote for Fidel Chavez Mena. In some areas, the soldiers will be wearing PDC emblems.

Duarte Radio Message Urges Citizens To Vote

PA1903025089 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 0223 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Statement by President Jose Napoleon Duarte broadcast "this afternoon" in San Salvador—recorded]

[Text] Salvadoran people: We are living during a very important time in our history. We will define the country's future in the 19 March elections. Despite adversity, it is our duty and right as Salvadoran citizens to defeat violence on 19 March. We must do this with our vote. Vote for the person you feel you should vote for. Your vote will be respected. The important thing is that you express your will in a free and responsible

manner, thus making the constitutional principle and the philosophical bases of democracy—sovereignty residing in the heart of the people—come true.

I will exercise my right as a Salvadoran citizen on 19 March and cast my vote. You should also exercise your right. Vote. The homeland will reward you.

God bless and protect El Salvador!

FMLN Attacks Air Force Headquarters

PA1903043389 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 0405 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Report by Rene Hurtado]

[Text] Only hours before tomorrow's elections begin at 0700, before the people begin casting their votes to elect a new president and vice president, the FMLN continues with its transportation stoppage and its attacks on military garrisons.

Today at approximately 2130 [0330 GMT], a group of rebels launched a surprise attack on the headquarters of the Salvadoran Air Force. Some shots were fired, some bazookas were also fired, but it is not known if they actually hit a target inside the base. However, Air Force spokesmen have said that the attack was launched from Santa Lucia Colonia. No damage or casualties resulted from this attack on the Air Force headquarters by FMLN rebels. The soldiers guarding the area repelled the rebel attack.

A search operation is under way in the area to find the rebels who attacked the Air Force base this evening. No casualties or damage resulted from this attack.

Vice President Issues Election Eve Address

PA1903043889 San Salvador Domestic Service in Spanish 0302 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Address by Vice President Rodolfo Castillo Claramount; place not given—live or recorded]

[Text] Good evening, dear listeners. On this occasion we wish to bring you an optimistic message; we wish to bring you a message of faith because the work of the new democratic process in El Salvador will conclude tomorrow. We have reached the crowning moment when, with our vote, we shall express our wishes for the continuation of this democratic process and choose those we want to rule us for the next 5 years.

At this time, at this historic moment, we must all have faith and we must have determination. We must cast our vote assured that nothing and no one will hinder our sacred right—your right, dear listener, your family's right, and the right of the Salvadoran people—to vote.

A week ago Sunday, President Duarte sent a message to the Salvadoran people and to the peoples of the world. He specifically addressed the world's most important spiritual and democratic leaders. President Duarte's message was heard by His Holiness John Paul II, the president of the Spanish Government, the presidents of Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Mexico—just to mention a few of the many fraternal nations and the many democratic world leaders—and they responded to the message by asking the FMLN to stop its attacks, its process of intimidation aimed at hindering the Salvadoran voter and [word indistinct] the results. We heard the FMLN's public and international statement committing itself, before the peoples of the world and these distinguished personalities, to respect the vote of the Salvadoran people; to refrain from attacking the voting centers and the voters on their way to cast their votes. We hope the FMLN will keep its promise. It made a very big commitment before the eyes of the world.

However, if this were not enough, Salvadoran people, friends, and listeners, we have the absolute protection offered by the Salvadoran Armed Forces. Yesterday, today, and always the Salvadoran Armed Forces stand at the side of the people, defending them and their sacred democratic right in their (?march) toward peace, justice, and liberty. Our friends, the members of the Salvadoran Armed Forces, will be giving us the protection we may need. Therefore, there is nothing to stop us, to stop you, dear listener, your friends, family, children, husband, any of the people, from casting your vote in a joyous, enthusiastic, optimistic, and determined manner. Tomorrow we will show friends and strangers, we will show ourselves, the determination we have been displaying for such a long time.

This evening, on behalf of President Duarte and our nation, I addressed the international election observers. I was happy to tell them, as I tell you now, that we walk with our heads held high because, among other things, we have kept a very important promise. We promised to respect the people's will and to promote and guarantee the opening and deepening of a free and democratic process for the Salvadoran people.

We have had several elections where the right to vote has been the most important. There have been two elections for deputies and municipal councilmen, and we are now going to have presidential elections.

With the great satisfaction in having done our duty, we have come here to tell you, once more, that these elections will be equally clean. They will be elections where you will have every guarantee to express your will freely.

Aside from the recognition we will receive from the international observers—recognition not of us but of all the Salvadoran people; the recognition of observers who have followed our process, step by step; many of them have witnessed our elections since 1982—we have also

won their confidence, because they now believe that the Salvadoran people are better at supporting democracy. It is a support that will not fade away. It is a decision of the people that is irreversible.

This evening we also want to congratulate and recognize the Central Electoral Council for the serious, honest, firm, clear, and clean way it is handling this electoral process. It is an Electoral Council made up of members who, in setting aside party interests, are devoted to a very serious task, a work of great responsibility.

We also want to take this opportunity to congratulate the more than 200,000 Salvadoran citizens who will be there, working at more than 7,000 voting centers throughout the country, so that we can all vote, so that the process will flow smoothly, so that we can all be guaranteed that your will, dear listener, will be respected.

We must all vote—I repeat—with confidence, certainty, and optimism. We must vote for democracy.

I also want to recognize the political parties, those that have been fighting for democracy in El Salvador for many years—some of them for more than 25 years. Others have joined this struggle more recently. The Salvadoran political spectrum now includes every ideology. This is true freedom. This is truly a living democracy.

We must all be proud of this because it is the result of the decision of all Salvadorans.

Therefore, we must all vote tomorrow, on 19 March, which is Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week. This civic and political act, this political decision by the Salvadoran people, must also include some kind of spiritual element. We are at the beginning of Holy Week. We are experiencing a moment of spiritual retreat. Let us take pride in our convictions. Let us respect the Salvadoran people's Christian and democratic convictions. Let us—I repeat, dear friends—cast our vote with great optimism and faith, with joy, with a smile on our faces, with our heads held high, with pride in being Salvadorans, because we are proud to be Salvadorans. In this manner we will guarantee that this democratic process will continue in El Salvador.

It does not matter who wins. What matters is that the people vote, calmly and responsibly, thinking of peace, freedom, respect, and tolerance, which are the norms of democracy; choosing carefully, so that your vote will confirm and reaffirm a participative democracy in El Salvador.

Thank you, dear listener. We know perfectly well that tomorrow we will have a civic celebration. Nothing and no one can stop you or me.

Everyone will know that El Salvador is a democratic nation with democratic citizens, and we will confirm this tomorrow.

Good evening and may God bless us all.

Election Day Violence, Results Reported

Explosions, Clashes Noted

PA1903130389 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1233 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] San Salvador, 19 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—Over 20 bomb explosions were heard in the predawn and early morning hours today in San Salvador before the presidential elections were to begin at 0700 (1300 GMT).

At 0300 (0900 GMT), a series of explosions preceded a total blackout in the Salvadoran capital, which has been practically militarized by the Army.

There were clashes between guerrillas and government troops in several capital city neighborhoods and areas on the outskirts of the capital.

Local radio stations reported that the guerrillas attacked military units this morning in San Ramon, a town close to the capital.

Guerrillas of the FMLN are carrying out actions to obstruct the elections, including attacks on the electrical system and a surface transportation stoppage.

REUTER Newsman Killed

PA1903130989 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1223 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] San Salvador, 19 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—Last night Salvadoran photographer Roberto Navas of the British news agency REUTER was shot and killed by soldiers at a checkpoint in San Salvador.

Luis Galdamez, a Salvadoran reporter who also works for REUTER, was also wounded during this incident. Navas and Galdamez were traveling on a motorcycle.

Galdamez is presently at Rosales Hospital. Hospital sources have indicated he is out of danger but could lose a hand as a result of the shot he received in his arm.

Galdamez told Salvadoran reporters he and Navas stopped at the checkpoint, showed their official press credentials, and were authorized to continue by the soldiers at the checkpoint. After receiving the authorization, they began to move and were then shot at from behind.

However, military sources insist the two reporters ignored their orders to stop.

The incident took place on Army Boulevard 7 km, near the main Salvadoran Air Force Base, a few minutes before midnight. [as received]

TV Reporter Killed in Morazan

PA1903131489 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1259 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] San Salvador, 19 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—Salvadoran reporter Mauricio Pineda, a sound technician for the local Canal Doce Television station, was shot and killed today in Morazan Department in the eastern part of the country.

According to Canal Doce sources, Pineda and a team from the "Today" newscast were traveling to La Union Department to cover today's elections.

The vehicle in which the reporters were traveling was machinegunned at a crossroads some 180 km from San Salvador.

There has been no official report of the incident, the second of this type in less than 12 hours, following the death last night of Roberto Navas, a reporter for the British agency REUTER.

Rebels Condemn 'Cowardly Action'

PA1903132289 (Clandestine) Radio Farabundo Marti in Spanish to El Salvador 1212 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] The dictatorship has carried out another cowardly action. Pay close attention: On the night of 18 March, two reporters were cowardly shot in Soyapango. Last night, reporter Roberto Navas and Luis Galdamez were shot by troops of the dictatorship.

The threats of Attorney General Roberto Garcia and Vides Casanova fell upon reporters Luis Galdamez and Roberto Navas last night. We are vigorously condemning this new cowardly action carried out by Vides Casanova's troops and commanding officers.

In the area of Soyapango at approximately 2200 last night, reporters Roberto Navas and Luis Galdamez were cowardly strafed by troops of the dictatorship.

Reports given by Soyapango residents indicate that [Air Force Commander] Juan Rafael Bustillo's troops are patrolling and continuously sowing terror in that densely populated area.

Reporters Roberto Navas and Luis Galdamez were riding a motorcycle at approximately 2200 when they were victims of indiscriminate shooting. We support the condemnation presented by our comrade reporters we give... [9-second break in reception].

We have learned that journalist Roberto Navas died instantaneously as a result of the shooting by Jose Napoleon Duarte's troops. [Words indistinct] seriously wounded. Luis Galdamez is critically ill, while Roberto Navas died instantaneously. The two reporters were members of the team of reporters [words indistinct] REUTER.

While condemning and vigorously supporting the journalists' protest [word indistinct] we urge you to repudiate this kind of action, which [words indistinct].

During today's transmission [6-second break in reception] and of Vides Casanova. The [words indistinct] civilians and the indiscriminate shooting of private vehicles, Red Cross vehicles, and reporters [words indistinct] cowardly actions [word indistinct] generalized [words indistinct] Vides Casanova's troops are carrying out within the repressive framework of the 19 March election farce.

Army Accepts Responsibility

PA1903161989 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1533 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] San Salvador, 19 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—The Salvadoran Army accepted responsibility this morning for the death of two reporters who were shot by soldiers in the past few hours in the capital and in the eastern San Miguel Department.

According to the official report, in both cases the soldiers fired when the reporters, both Salvadorans, ignored orders to halt. However, friends of the victims maintain that this is not true.

A spokesman for the Armed Forces Press Committee said that last night an Air Force member fired at photographers Roberto Navas and Luis Galdamez, Salvadorans who work for the British REUTER news agency, "when they failed to stop at a military checkpoint" at a capital city avenue.

Navas died and Galdamez was seriously injured. Galdamez was left lying in the street until he was picked up "several hours later," by his own account, and taken to a hospital, where he underwent surgery.

According to hospital sources and REUTER, Galdamez is now "out of danger"; it will not be necessary to amputate his right arm, as was originally feared.

Another reporter, Mauricio Pineda, a sound technician for Canal Doce Television of San Salvador, died this morning in the eastern part of the country at a crossroads when a soldier fired at Pineda's vehicle while he was on his way to cover today's elections.

The Army spokesman emphasized that in both cases "the soldiers fired on suspicious-looking people who did not respect the stop sign at a military checkpoint."

However, Galdamez said he and Navas, who were on a motocycle, did stop at the checkpoint and that the soldiers fired on them without justification.

Raul Beltran, one of Mauricio Pineda's coworkers, said the Canal Doce team was traveling in a station wagon with white flags and signs indicating they were reporters and that the soldiers fired without having first given any indication the reporters should stop.

Acevado on Possible Coup

PA1903135289 Paris AFP in Spanish 1248 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] San Salvador, 19 Mar (AFP)—Salvadoran Foreign Minister Ricardo Acevedo today warned about the danger of a coup d'etat [words indistinct] a low voter turnout [words indistinct], because that would undermine the legitimacy of the new government."

During a reception held in honor of foreign observers at a San Salvador hotel, Acevedo told AFP—as the polls indicate—"that the hard and murderous current within that party [referring to ARENA] represented by [Major Roberto] D'Aubuisson prevails, which is what I think would happen." [sentence as received]

The Salvadoran elections are to be held today amid a war situation and a boycott decreed by the leftist rebels of the FMLN, who asked the Salvadoran people to refrain from voting, cast void or null votes, or vote for the leftist CD, whose presidential candidate is Social Democratic Guillermo Ungo.

Acevedo clearly stated that the Army could provoke a coup if one of the two aforementioned situations occur.

Acevedo said: "The Army will be neutral to the last minute." He added that the military would intervene if the "dialogue to seek a civil solution collapses. A coup could take place then."

Acevedo said the United States "gave the benefit of the doubt" to the Salvadoran election process, in which "700,000 people" of the 1.8 people registered to vote will vote.

"A low voter turnout would undermine the legitimacy of the new government and would mean the Salvadoran people rejected the elections," Acevedo said.

However, the Salvadoran foreign minister still hopes 1.3-1.4 million Salvadorans will cast their votes today, a voter turnout that "would condemn the FMLN, which has begun its retreat."

Acevedo said that if there is a high voter turnout and a "government of national consensus is formed, the guerrilla movement could be defeated; if that happens, the FMLN would not last even 3 more months."

The Salvadoran foreign minister also stated that if a second election round takes place—if none of the seven registered parties obtain over 50 percent of the votes—the PDC would have the support "of most parties." "It would not be difficult for the PDC to overcome an unfavorable result no larger than 8 percent," Acevedo said.

Acevedo reiterated his fear that, if ARENA wins, the "hard-line" current within ARENA, which is represented by D'Aubuisson and Colonel Sigifredo Ochoa, would prevail. "That would lead to a polarization of forces and would give renewed force to the FMLN. I believe an all-out war and a national rebellion could result from an ARENA victory," Acevedo warned.

Acevedo said a victory by PDC candidate Fidel Chavez Mena would open the doors to a "national consensus" to solve the war problem the country has been experiencing for 9 years through dialogue and negotiations.

Acevedo's statements regarding the possibility of a coup agreed with the statements made by FMLN spokesmen in Mexico about a possible Army action to maintain the PDC in power.

Since 1980, the United States has supported the PDC as the best option to face the guerrilla movement through a plan of reform and war. In the 1984 elections, when Jose Napoleon Duarte defeated D'Aubuisson, the Salvadoran right accused Washington of favoring the PDC.

In addition, Acevedo said if the guerrilla movement's election boycott is successful, the FMLN could force a negotiation.

The guerrillas declared war on the election process after the Salvadoran Government 2 weeks ago rejected a rebel proposal to postpone the elections until September.

Rebels Report on Clashes

PA1903145789

[Editorial Report] (Clandestine) Radio Farabundo Marti in Spanish to El Salvador at 1311 GMT on 19 March broadcasts approximately 35 minutes of military reports, including clashes between the Salvadoran Army and FMLN guerrillas that took place on the eve of the Salvadoran elections and are taking place on election day itself, and details on the effects of the transportation stoppage on the election process.

A number of reports indicate that explosions and shootouts are heard in San Ramon, San Antonio Abad, Ciudad Satelite, and other areas located on the outskirts of San Salvador and in San Salvador itself, where over 20 explosions have left the entire capital without electricity. One report adds: "No one is voting today, 19 March; transportation is nonexistent, and no one is voting in San Salvador or in any other part of the country. The 19 March election farce is a complete failure."

Another report states that FMLN guerrilla units clashed with Military Detachment No 1 troops in San Miguel de Mercedes, Chalatenango Department, at 2200 on 18 March, inflicting five casualties. The report adds that guerrilla units attacked Army forces in Tejutla, Chalatenango Department, inflicting over 20 casualties: "After our attack, the enemy began shooting at Tejutla Church, claiming FMLN guerrillas were hiding inside."

A report from Morazan Department says the FMLN damaged an Air Force helicopter, seized one M-60 machinegun and a PRC-77 communication radio, and inflicted four casualties on Military Detachment No 4 troops.

A Santa Ana Department report advises that "heavy" clashes took place in Metapan, Tejutepeque, and Ilobasco. Another report indicates FMLN forces attacked the Air Force headquarters at approximately 2100 on 18 March.

Another report states that "heavy" clashes took place in Chinameca and San Vicente City; FMLN units attacked Army positions in Berlin, Usulutan Department; and that the clashes still continue in Usulutan Department.

The next report states that FMLN units clashed with Lenca Battalion troops for several hours in San Miguel de Mercedes, Chalatenango Department, inflicting a total of 15 casualties. In addition, "we recovered one M-60 machinegun, one M-79 grenade launcher, and one PRC-77 communication radio."

The last report states: "We have inflicted many casualties in San Ramon, Usulutan Department, and throughout the rest of the country, where heavy clashes are presently taking place. Vehicles are not circulating in San Salvador, and civilians have not gone out of their homes."

Rebel Attack in San Salvador

PA1903141889 Paris AFP in Spanish 1404 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] San Salvador, 19 Mar (AFP)—Army helicopters fired rockets this morning on San Ramon neighborhood in San Salvador, where some 100 guerrillas attacked a Civil Defense post.

AFP reporters witnessed the military action, which began at about 1330 GMT following heavy shooting that had been heard sporadically for more than 1 hour in this neighborhood in northern San Salvador.

According to local radio stations, over 100 members of the FMLN invaded San Ramon less than 1 hour before the presidential elections polls opened today.

Coprefa Reports 6 Dead

PA1903151989 Paris AFP in Spanish 1458 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] San Salvador, 19 Mar (AFP)—Official sources reported that at least six persons were killed and several were wounded early this morning during the clashes between guerrillas and the Army that marked the opening of presidential elections day.

The Armed Forces Press Committee (Coprefa) reported that five guerrillas were killed and one policeman was wounded during a harassment action in Suchitoto, Cuscatlan Department, in central El Salvador.

In San Miguel de Mercedes, in the northern Chalatenango Department, the armed clashes left a toll of one soldier dead and four civilian homes destroyed, the military sources reported.

The sources added that the FMLN also harassed military posts in the outskirts of Usulutan, 110 km east of San Salvador, but there were no casualties.

Simultaneously, the rebels attacked military objectives in Tecoluca and San Sebastian, San Vicente Department; Ilobasco and Tejutepeque, Cabanas Department; and Mercedes Umana and Berlin, Usulutan Department.

Sources from the local commander's office in Lourdes, La Libertad Department, reported that a truck carrying voters was machinegunned, wounding several persons.

Duarte Election Day Interview

PA1903164589 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 1410 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Interview with President Jose Napoleon Duarte by Salvador Castellanos on 19 March; place not given—live or recorded]

[Text] [Castellanos] We want to thank President Jose Napoleon Duarte for kindly granting us a few minutes for this interview on election day. Good morning, Mr President. You have a very broad political experience because you have reached the country's Presidency. Based on that experience, can you tell us what we Salvadorans can expect from the elections?

[Duarte] First, allow me to greet all Salvadorans today on election day. They will decide our country's fate, what course the fatherland will follow, and how to deal with the major problems of peace and the unending search for prosperity and security in our country. I think that the country's process has been growing since 1982 with the start of the election process. The democratic process has been making headway in many fields such as human rights, organization of political parties, and freedom of

expression—and in all other aspects vital to reaching full democratic life. I see that is the meaning of today's elections. They give continuity, strength, and courage to the democratic process.

Today's voting also plays a key role in giving continuity to the democratic process. If the democratic process were foiled [words indistinct]. Therefore, today's elections give continuity to our country's democratic process.

[Castellanos] Will there be continuity regardless of the political force that takes power?

[Duarte] I understand that the basic concept of democracy is that the leader places power at the disposal of the people. Cases such as Nicaragua's leaders, who say they can hand over the government but not power, do not constitute democracy. The idea is to place in the hands of the people the important decision of choosing their leaders [words indistinct]. In this respect, that is the basis of the [word indistinct] and the example we are giving the world. We will have elections where a host of a views and ideologies, from the extreme right to the extreme left, are represented. The people are given a choice from that host of ideologies on whom to vote for and what course the country should take.

[Castellanos] Are you pessimistic that the right may rule this country again? Does this represent a return to conditions that existed in the past?

[Duarte] First, we must be optimistic the people will not choose [word indistinct] forces. The people will again choose a democratic path and will choose that major democratic front, which all of us support. Should the people choose the extreme right and we turn power over to the hands of the extreme right, that force has two short-term alternatives. The first option would be for it to [words indistinct]. That means the next government accepts the developed constraints placed on it during this time regarding human rights, the right to [words indistinct], the use of repression and force, freedom of expression, and freedom of the press. If the government respects (?these limitations) imposed on it, that government will be helping the democratic process, although it may implement some specific changes that may mar this process.

However, it may happen that once the extreme right forces reach power, they will unleash a witch-hunt, repression, and violence—with death squads everywhere, threats to all [words indistinct], making people afraid. Under those conditions, there may be confrontations with the Salvadoran Armed Forces, which now clearly understand the concept of democracy and that it is in their interests to defend democracy as their chief constitutional duty.

However, there is the danger that the repressive attitude of a repressive government that also goes against the Armed Forces could lead to an overall state of repression. That overall state of repression would be countered with [word indistinct] of repression. That state would obviously [words indistinct] of this [words indistinct].

[Castellanos] Mr President, in your opinion, what path would that force follow? Which of the two paths would it follow?

[Duarte] One of them is that a phenomenon of [words indistinct] among internal groups, which [words indistinct]. There are groups of various tendencies, and their positions may change. We hope they maintain [word indistinct] positions. [Passage indistinct].

[Castellanos] Mr President, let us not talk about the government but about the people who will be part of that new government.

[Duarte] I believe that if [words indistinct] people and if [word indistinct] we would see how they do not inspire trust in the people to have [word indistinct] in that government. Such a government would bring a state of repression and persecution. However, the pressure exerted by the people in general and the media shape a government. When people realize in a few months they are facing a government that wishes to close their mouths and wishes them to be silent regarding a particular massacre or murder, people will confront the government. Media participation is vital, which is why I have insisted that a country's best achievement is freedom of speech and thought, because our silence will indicate something is going wrong in the country if we cannot speak up. Others will have to leave the country, because they dare to speak and will be afraid of being killed. [Words indistinct].

We have to be aware of what is going to happen in our country. [Words indistinct] will realize whether the government or the country is heading toward democracy or returning to past times, or whether the new government is heading toward increased repression and crime and toward the formation of death squads.

[Castellanos] President Duarte, are the Salvadoran people ready to cast a sensible, [word indistinct] vote that will truly [words indistinct] our country's activities?

[Duarte] We must give the benefit of the doubt to the Salvadoran people, as it should be given to all the peoples of the world. They can all make mistakes. When people make mistakes, however, they correct them and seek democracy. Democracy is not limiting the people [word indistinct]. For example, to say peasants do not have the right to vote because they cannot reason as well as I can—because I am an engineer or a lawyer—is a mistake. I believe all Salvadorans must [word indistinct] more, because voting allows us to decide—through all the information we have received—whom to vote for.

Democracy is weakened by [words indistinct] voters, [words indistinct] a policy so as to be able to [words indistinct] in the elections [words indistinct] of the party representatives who are at the various voting tables is clearly shown when those representatives give you two ballots to vote or in their attitude toward a [word indistinct] who comes to vote and does not know what to do with his identification paper. Those representatives begin telling him what to do, and they tell him to mark here and there, depending on the party they want that man to vote for. Those types of actions are bad and weaken [words indistinct] democracy.

I insist we must [words indistinct] election process must have credibility so people can chose their own destiny. The peasant who [words indistinct], that peasant also because he is a Salvadoran citizen and has a right to feel and think. His feelings and thoughts must be [words indistinct] citizens. [Words indistinct] elections. Elections are a basic instrument of democracy, in which people's feelings and thoughts are measured.

[Castellanos] Mr President, the conflict has been [words indistinct]?

[Duarte] I think the conflict [words indistinct], we are practically in a state of (?despair). However, [words indistinct] terrorist actions [words indistinct]. I believe we are engaged in [words indistinct] a process that began at La Palma [words indistinct] three times, and finally, [words indistinct] including the meeting of several countries to seek a [words indistinct] to make them understand [word indistinct] that the concept of violence [words indistinct]. It must be understood that if there are problems that we must correct through a democratic system, we all want to correct them.

[Castellanos] [Question indistinct]?

[Duarte] Unfortunately, it has taken a toll of many lives. [Words indistinct] because the circumstances [words indistinct] a change in which, for the first time, [words indistinct] even though [words indistinct] because the elections by themselves are a means for the people to express themselves. This [words indistinct] is an improvement in the sense that if we continue working to [word indistinct] the causes that [words indistinct].

We continue trying to solve problems of human rights; we continue searching [words indistinct], if we continue [words indistinct] so the Armed Forces will be an instrument that will [word indistinct] democracy, and not just the power [words indistinct] that represents [word indistinct] that changes to reach the (?calvary of the cross) of a democratic state.

If we are [words indistinct] the causes that took the guerrillas to do (?what they have done), if we make [words indistinct], we are taking legitimacy away from the guerrillas [words indistinct] in the democratic process. That is why it is important for elections to be held, because this is part of the democratic process and part of the efforts we must make to rally the people around this [words indistinct] refers to the the counterinsurgents, and says there are the insurgents, and democracy is [words indistinct]. Because for the first time in the history of mankind, the guerrillas [words indistinct] military forces [words indistinct] in a war, now that [words indistinct] in a democracy. They do not know how to adapt to this (?ideology) [word indistinct] and are willing to seek a military type struggle.

Then, when [words indistinct] the politicians from the Revolutionary Democratic Front and not the military, and they enter society, [words indistinct] a contradiction. [Words indistinct] the politicians [words indistinct] will go to the elections, participate in the elections, and [words indistinct] the votes, and the FMLN does not want elections.

[Castellanos] [Question indistinct]?

[Duarte] [Words indistinct] then, they kill [words indistinct] electoral [words indistinct] at that time the sectors [words indistinct] have had to accept this is a reality [words indistinct] electoral force. [Words indistinct] they will make [words indistinct], but they will not do anything to limit the possibilities for the CD [words indistinct]. [Words indistinct] and they will have to confront in these elections [words indistinct].

[Castellanos] [Question indistinct]?

[Duarte] I think that [words indistinct] where we have to strengthen the democratic process through this [word indistinct]. If the president that is elected has a [word indistinct] historical responsibility of achieving peace. Then, there will be greater possibilities of achieving peace.

[Words indistinct] have identified who want peace and who want war. I personally want to continue seeking peace. I will continue striving for peace. I will continue making that effort within the framework of democracy, so we may have a legal state and may all know [words indistinct], and we may not destroy the progress achieved. That is why it is important to decide today, this morning, (?to go out) and vote. They must vote because voting is very important, no matter for what party, and because voting gives us Salvadorans a share of responsibility in the fate of peace.

[Castellanos] Mr President, I would like to ask you a personal question: How do you feel, considering you are receiving chemotherapy treatments for your cancer? How do you feel?

[Duarte] I feel a little physically (?exhausted). Obviously, this illness causes exhaustion. One feels one is going to die [words indistinct]. I have had get over that and gain strength from day to day.

[Castellanos] What has enabled you to do that?

[Duarte] Faith in God. Faith in God and my responsibility to all of you to fulfill my duty make me continue struggling to reach one more [word indistinct] every day to do what can be done [words indistinct] for the benefit of the people. As I said, from a physical viewpoint, this is very hard. I have gone through very serious crises. [Passage indistinct] On another occasion, I had a total paralysis of [word indistinct], something that posed a very serious risk, because it was a lethal infection. On the operating table, [passage indistinct].

Every time I receive chemotherapy treatments, I get side effects. For example, I concluded a chemotherapy treatments the day we had the Central American president's meeting, and when the meeting ended, my liver was swollen and my [words indistinct]. I have endured all of this patiently and (?dutifully).

[Castellanos] Is it very difficult to [words indistinct]...

[Duarte, interrupting] It is very difficult because my doctors say I have to undergo a treatment every 3 weeks. Of course, [words indistinct] because there are important [words indistinct], when I needed to be in shape to deal with situations pertaining to my [passage indistinct]. This is what has happened all these months [passage indistinct]. Tomorrow, I will get the next three chemotherapy treatments. The doctors want the treatments to end the following day; therefore, on election day, I [passage indistinct]. I will feel the side effects later during Holy Week. [words indistinct].

[Castellanos] Mr President, there are three political periods, men, objectives that were unfulfilled. [sentence as heard] [Words indistinct].

[Duarte] Had I been the president in 1972, everything [words indistinct], the war, [words indistinct]. I would have had the the opportunity to deal with that war under better terms.

[Castellanos] Would we have a different El Salvador now?

[Duarte] Yes, it would be a different El Salvador now. Unfortunately, all those oligarchic forces, which [words indistinct] mean that power resides in one sector. I believe [words indistinct] everybody's frustration and the result of [words indistinct] is violence. [Words indistinct] violence when a president sees in our history [words indistinct] there is a war, an economic crisis, problems in the national [word indistinct], and economic problems at all levels. In other words, there is a [word indistinct] crisis. There is hatred in peoples' hearts.

I assumed the Presidency under those conditions, and I tried to seek a way to allow the existence of a survival economic platform. I am not talking about development, because [words indistinct] the conditions the country is experiencing do not allow us to talk about development, but about survival. I see the basis to make friends everywhere and receive aid from those friends such as Spain, Germany, France, Italy, and the United States. We needed to obtain economic aid from them so our country would survive. Meanwhile, we also implemented a serious, political, democratic structure that supported our nationality and gave us the opportunity to solve problems. [Words indistinct].

That has been my program, and I [words indistinct] I believe the country understood [words indistinct] it was done for human rights, to give freedom to the people, especially freedom of expression, which [word indistinct] that a number of systems have been born in this country. Those systems will prevent people from stopping a process that has already begun. In other words, [words indistinct] a single line, which is the line of democracy. We now have to take care and maintain that system for it to grow strong, for it to have [words indistinct] and to develop into a leading force of democracy [words indistinct] to our country. That is what I think about that [words indistinct].

[Castellanos] [Words indistinct] Jose Napoleon Duarte's legacy to history and El Salvador?

[Duarte] My legacy is my will and faith. I believe people cannot survive without faith and hope. I have tried to give people hope we can solve all problems if we walk on the road to freedom. It does not matter how long it takes, because those who work with hope and faith will move mountains.

[Castellanos] That is a great [words indistinct] Mr President. Thank you, television viewers, for kindly accompanying us through this important interview granted by President Duarte on this very important day for all Salvadorans.

[Duarte] Thank you. Salvadoran people, let us vote today, let us vote to express our will and choose our own destiny. Thank you, and good morning.

150 Army Casualties Claimed

PA1903182589 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 1533 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Attention: Radio Venceremos is now receiving reports on guerrilla incursions into Zacatecoluca and Santa Ana cities. In Santa Ana, the FMLN guerrillas clashed with 2d Infantry Brigade troops.

We now have reports confirming that FMLN guerrillas have inflicted almost 150 casualties on the Army throughout the country. We repeat, according to reports from the 14 country departments, the FMLN has inflicted almost 150 Army casualties, including dead and wounded. The casualties include one officer, one Air Force pilot, and many noncommissioned officers.

Radio Venceremos is waiting for the confirmation of the details on that report. We have inflicted 150 casualties, including dead and wounded, as the result of the clashes that have taken place throughout the country in the last few hours. During those operations we seized weapons, as in the case of La Estancia, Morazan Department, where we seized weapons from Military Detachment 4 troops. [2-second break in reception] a report of 150 casualties and 1 damaged helicopter.

We inform our people and the entire world that today, 19 March, there have been clashes throughout the country, including incursions into department capitals and San Salvador. We have attacked Army positions and headquarters, and we have carried out ambushes on various roads. All those actions are part of our support for the people's repudiation and rejection of the counterinsurgent farce.

Voting Increases, Shooting Wanes

PA1903173589 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1648 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] San Salvador, 19 Mar (ACAN)—After a 1st hour in which there was a very small turnout at the polls, the number of Salvadorans going to vote in the capital city and other towns is increasing. Thousands of voters were standing in lines at mid-morning.

Army and police units surround the polls, while military helicopters are flying over the city.

Fidel Chavez Mena of the ruling PDC told the press that he has received reports from his followers throughout the country to the effect that 95 percent of the polls have been installed and are operating, after overcoming some early morning problems in some of the places.

The polls opened at 0700 (1300 GMT) and will close at 1700 (2300 GMT).

The bomb explosions and shooting heard throughout the early hours in San Salvador were no longer heard around 1000 (1600 GMT).

However, attacks against vehicles and clashes between the guerrillas and the Army continue to be reported in various parts of country's interior.

The guerrillas continue to boycott the elections with a blockade of all land transportation, but they have announced they will not directly attack the voters or the polling stations.

Highway checkpoint soldiers killed two Salvadoran reporters, Roberto Navas and Mauricio Pineda, in two separate shootings late last night and early this morning. Navas was a photographer from an international news agency and Pineda was a sound technician for a local television channel.

Prominent among the electors, both in the capital and in neighboring towns, are many members of the main opposition party, the rightist ARENA, who are carrying banners and other visible signs of their party preference.

Surveys have that shown ARENA's candidate, Alfredo Cristiani, will almost certainly win the elections.

ACAN-EFE correspondents who toured voting booths in the capital and other towns saw soldiers and policemen carefully checking all voters before allowing them to enter the voting areas.

Voters who arrive in automobiles have to leave them more than 200 meters away.

In Apopa, a town some 12 km north of San Salvador, the voting booths opened very late because their location was changed at the last minute, which generated protests from the delegates of several parties and led to brawls between ARENA and PDC supporters.

In the early morning, military helicopters used flares several times to light up Apopa and its environs, presumably to locate guerrillas.

Members of the CD, an alliance of leftist parties, said in Apopa that they have received death threats to dissuade them from voting.

In the small town of Tonacatepeque, some 16 km northeast of San Salvador, the delay in beginning the voting was only half an hour long, and the election process is proceeding normally.

In San Ramon, another town close to the capital with 30,000 inhabitants, the voting began after a considerable delay because of a guerrilla incursion in the dawn hours.

Army helicopters fired rockets for several hours at the slopes of San Salvador Volcano, in the northern part of the capital, presumably at the guerrilla columns that attacked San Ramon.

Foreign Newsman Killed

PA1903190389 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1842 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Report by Renancio Ramirez]

[Text] We have just confirmed that Netherlands reporter Cornell Lagrow of a Netherlands television station was killed this morning as he was covering a skirmish in the town of San Francisco Javier, Usulutan Department.

A sound technician of the (CBS) television network was also killed.

According to reports, Cornell Lagrow was dead on arrival at San Pedro Hospital. Lagrow was brought to this capital. He was killed while covering events in San Francisco Javier, Usulutan Department, where there has been heavy fighting between the guerrillas of the FMLN and the Army.

More on Reporter's Death

PA1903195989 San Salvador Radio Cadena Sonora in Spanish 1905 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] A CBS journalist has reported that although heavy clashes continued, his news team managed to get to San Pedro Hospital. He also pointed out that even though the news team's vehicles were duly marked International Press and carried a white flag, they were pursued by Salvadoran Army aircraft and shelled. The CBS journalist said by the time they arrived at the San Pedro Hospital, journalist Cornell Lagrow was already dead. He was unconscious when he was being taken to the hospital, but about 2 minutes later he died from serious wounds. This is what we have learned directly from a spokesman from U.S. CBS television network and from the staff at San Pedro Hospital. We have also received a telephone call from Arturo Velasquez, our correspondent in Usulutan, who will later give us more details of this attack that took the life of a third journalist during today's elections.

Col Ponce on Election Process

PA1903221689 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1844 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Report by Rosi Castillo on "excerpts of statements" by Colonel Rene Emilio Ponce, chief of operations of the Army General Staff, to unidentified reporters at a San Salvador voting table on 19 March—recorded]

[Text] [Ponce] [Words indistinct] here in El Salvador if they wanted to establish a mechanism [words indistinct] to slowly establish peace in the entire region. Those are the efforts [words indistinct].

[Reporter] What can the government do about the FMLN?

[Ponce] We can ask them to join the country's democratic, civic life to [words indistinct] people to live in peace.

[Reporter] How do you view the voting situation and the security and surveillance the Armed Forces is providing, especially now that the Armed Forces are being charged with the death of two journalists? I think you are aware of that. Tell us something about that.

[Ponce] We are the first ones to regret the death of the Canal Doce newsmen who died in San Miguel and the REUTER correspondent who died here on Army Boulevard. Those deaths are the result of the prevailing unrest and nervousness. There are bullets being fired all over the place and, unfortunately, those reporters were the first to (?get hit). This continues to be a problem that the Armed Forces has [words indistinct].

[Reporter] Did the Army suffer casualties during the incidents in San Ramon?

[Ponce] I can tell you that a Bracamonte Battalion corporal died and another soldier was wounded. However, the 1st Infantry Brigade and Bracamonte Battalion soldiers reacted quickly and repelled the terrorist activity that is currently causing (?chaos) in San Salvador.

[Reporter] Have other incidents been reported?

[Ponce] It is difficult to believe what the FMLN is saying. Their spokesman in Mexico City said they would not attack the voting tables. However, we have heard that voting tables have been attacked in 15 areas of the country. Attacks on voting tables were reported in Chalatenango, San Antonio, Ciudad Barrios, Carolina, and north [word indistinct]. In Usulutan, the FMLN planted two bombs just outside the city to frighten the people. However, our people's democratic nature is telling the FMLN: We do not want terrorism, we want peace, and we are using peaceful means to achieve power and choose our president and vice president.

[Reporter] How is the voting process progressing throughout the country?

[Ponce] There are 27 municipalities where elections are not being held. We know for sure that there are municipalities, like Cinquera and Arambala, where [words indistinct], and we also know that [words indistinct]. We know there are 27 municipalities where there will be no voting and there are others that [words indistinct] that the representatives of the political parties and members of the municipal Voting Table Boards [words indistinct].

[Reporter] How many soldiers are protecting the (?Voting Table Boards) throughout the country?

[Ponce] About 80 percent of our soldiers are part of the Democracy Plan. We are going to continue offering the same protection after the voting centers are closed [words indistinct].

[Reporter] We have read some reports that the Armed Forces are urging the people to vote for the PDC. Will the soldiers be allowed to vote?

[Ponce] First, I emphatically and categorically deny that we are urging the people to vote for the PDC. We have sent a memorandum to all the commanders and [word indistinct] chiefs advising them that we must have a completely apolitical attitude and refrain from participating in any political activity. We must protect all political parties, we must protect all the voting centers, and we must ensure the safety of the areas surrounding the voting centers. We are not interested in who wins the

elections; we are interested in making sure that the will of the people is respected and [words indistinct]. This is a day for the Salvadoran people to prove their democratic nature.

[Reporter] Will soldiers be allowed to cast their votes today?

[Ponce] As soldiers, we all have the right to vote. But before we cast our vote we are going to fulfill our duty. Our duty is to guarantee safety. This will not create a problem. For example, if a soldier's identification card was issued in San Salvador but he is stationed in Aguilares, he will be allowed to vote at a specific voting center. Those who can vote will do so as civilians and they will be unarmed. [Words indistinct] mostly administrative personnel and [word indistinct].

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] the rebels have threatened to launch a large attack. Do you have enough men to fight them at this time?

[Ponce] Since 1982, we have [words indistinct] democratic process in the country. The people [words indistinct] before and after the elections. [Words indistinct] amid sabotage to the power system. We are also experiencing a water problem [words indistinct]. We are going to exercise our right as established in the Constitution and we are going protect the integrity of the people, our sovereignty, and [words indistinct].

Defense Minister on Casualties

PA1903191489 Paris AFP in Spanish 1850 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] San Salvador, 19 Mar (AFP)—Defense Minister General Eugenio Vides Casanova has told the news media that 12 guerrillas and 1 soldier were killed while 15 soldiers were wounded during the early morning battles that took place in various parts of El Salvador.

Gen Vides Casanova also told the media that the guerrillas from the FMLN have today engaged in 10 clashes, 20 harassments, and 3 sabotage actions.

"There have been many attacks but without any results," the defense minister said, adding that by noon "normalcy" had been restored in most parts of national territory.

However, he admitted that the polling stations in eight municipalities had been unable to open, which brings to 29 out of 262 the number of municipalities where elections have been suspended.

Vides stated that halfway through election day, one-third of the over 1.8 million voters had cast their votes for a new Salvadoran president.

Officer on Chalatenango Attacks

PA1903205889 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2018 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] El Paraiso (El Salvador), 19 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—Colonel Alexander Mendez, commander of the 4th Infantry Brigade, the main garrison in the northern part of the country, has told ACAN-EFE that over 500 guerrilla fighters attacked two towns in Chalatenango Department hours before the presidential elections started.

According to the officer, the clashes, which began at 2200 last night and ended at 0500 today, resulted in the death of seven rebels and one soldier near the towns of Tejutla and San Miguel de Mercedes. Alexander Mendez said at the EL Paraiso garrison that the high number of guerrilla fighters included "attackers and others who provide cooperation and care for the wounded."

The officer reported 17 casualties, including 9 wounded soldiers.

A peasant woman died when a bomb exploded in her kitchen during the attack on San Miguel de Mercedes. The explosion also blew off her sons' legs, the military commander said.

Mendez stated that five houses were destroyed during the attack on San Miguel de Mercedes, 7 km from the capital of Chalatenango Department.

The Salvadoran officer confirmed that three U.S. military advisers had traveled to Chalatenango to help counter the guerrilla offensive.

ACAN-EFE was able to ascertain that one of the officers included a U.S. Air Force colonel, who was wearing fatigues and carrying an AR-15 rifle on his shoulder.

Mendez asserted that there are usually four U.S. military advisers at the 4th Infantry Brigade and added that they are allowed to carry weapons like the AR-15 "whenever the circumstances require it," although they may not participate in offensive operations.

The clashes caused panic among people in Chalatenango who could hear the heavy firing between the guerrillas and the Salvadoran Army shortly after the voting tables opened.

According to the Salvadoran officer, last night's guerrilla attack is "one of the most important in the latest offensive" launched by the FMLN in September.

Mendez said that the guerrilla attack was carried out with numerous weapons. He emphasized the use of the new AK-M rifles, "a new version of the famous GDR-made AK-47."

Vides Casanova on 'Incidents'

PA1903214089 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 2031 GMT 19 Mar

[Report by Oscar Venancio Ramirez]

[Text] Defense Minister General Eugenio Vides Casanova has visited La Alameda Roosevelt to observe the voting process. He also said an investigation will be conducted into the murders of three reporters, two Salvadorans and a Netherlander. There will also be an investigation into the wounding of a Salvadoran reporter and a CBS reporter.

[Begin Vides recording] This is the same question asked [words indistinct]. The election process is proceeding normally in all municipalities except seven. Clashes were reported in two municipalities and the elections were suspended in two others. One of them is El Sauce, where communications have been cut off. The other is Santa Elena, where a clash occurred. I think people will vote here later. No voting is taking place in four other municipalities.

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]

[Vides] I have no other information. At the time I departed, I sent for reports from the hospital. I was told he died, but we have to gather more data on how the incident happened.

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]

[Vides] We have always held reporters in the highest regard. All Armed Forces members have been informed of this. But problems arise when some people ignore checkpoints and the guards try to stop them. I hereby appeal to people to obey checkpoints. We are the first to regret these incidents. We have very good and close relations with the media and know [words indistinct].

[Reporter] Will this have repercussions?

[Vides] Serious repercussions will certainly occur, but you can rest assured that what happened was unintentional. Some people ignored the order to stop. The people should be more alert and aware of the situation because of the rebels' attacks. [end recording]

More Rebel Battle Reports

PA2003013989

[Editorial Report] (Clandestine) Radio Farabundo Marti in Spanish to El Salvador at 2200 GMT on 19 March carries 25 minutes of "war bulletins."

The station begins by saying that the FMLN inflicted more than 150 government casualties on 19 March. The FMLN says the casualties were inflicted as follows: 38 in Chalatenango, 20 in Morazan, 35 in Usulutan, 25 in Salvador, 5 in Santa Ana, and 9 in San Miguel. Radio Farabundo Marti does not account for the remaining casualties that it claims to have inflicted. The report says these casualties were inflicted "during the first 14 hours of 19 March."

The station goes on to say the FMLN damaged five helicopters on 19 March. The station announcer reports that "a Hughes-500 helicopter was damaged in San Ramon. A Hughes-500 and a rocket-firing helicopter were damaged in the San Salvador Volcano area. Another was damaged in San Francisco Javier and still another in Morazan."

The clandestine station then states that "on 19 March, FMLN guerrillas executed an operation called: Comrade Tonati, we swear to win in our march to victory. This operation consisted of a three-pronged attack on San Ramon, in the northern part of San Salvador, where heavy clashes occurred with 1st Infantry Brigade members and the dictatorship's war planes. The fighting started at 0530. Two rocket-firing helicopters and a Hughes-500 helicopter arrived on the scene at 0700. Simultaneously, five helicopters landed troops between Ayutuxtepeque and San Ramon. Our men, who fought the enemy until 0830, inflicted 15 casualties on the 1st Infantry Brigade. The wounded include a gunner. In addition, we report to the people and the international community that the Air Force fired rockets on and strafed residents of San Ramon and the San Roque outskirts."

The report continues: "We have just received reports that our antiaircraft gunners in San Ramon damaged a Hughes-500 helicopter, whose pilot was badly wounded."

The Farabundo Marti report continues: "The Air Force has also been firing rockets on and strafing the outskirts of San Francisco Javier, wounding more than 10 people. Our men have strict control of this town. No voting has taken place here, our comrades have reported. Our men hit a Hughes-500 helicopter and a UH-1H helicopter in the Nejapa area, San Salvador Volcano area. The aircraft were forced to fly away. At 1230 two helicopters and a C-47 plane arrived on the scene, but were forced away after strafing El Salitre and El Castano. We inflicted 10 casualties on the Ramon Belloso Battalion, which was headed for a military operation in the San Salvador Volcano area."

The station continues: "We have received reports throughout the day that our men have continued to control Metapan, where no voting has taken place and the traffic stoppage has been 100-percent effective. No elections have taken place in Agua Caliente, Chalatenango, either. We denounce and condemn the repression and the open and blatant aggression staged by the Armed Forces against local and foreign reporters. This repression demonstrates that the dictatorship's high command is afraid of the truth that might be relayed to our people and the world. Three reporters were killed on 19 March in separate actions. One of them is a Netherlander, who

was killed in Usulutan. Another was wounded in San Salvador by the Armed Forces. Vides Casanova has ordered reporters attacked."

The station says clashes occurred in Dulce Nombre de Maria, Chalatenango: "FMLN forces attacked Azmitia Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade, in Tejutla. In this clash the battalion sustained 20 casualties. In addition, our men seized two M-16 rifles, 400 5.56-mm cartridges, 500 7.62-mm cartridges, and other military supplies.

The final report states: "At 0600 on 19 March, militia units occupied El Rosario, Citala, for 1 and ½ hours. Guerrillas attacked an enemy position in Agua Caliente with people's artillery at 0130."

Polls Close; Violence Continues

PA1903233189 Paris AFP in Spanish 2313 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] San Salvador, 19 Mar (AFP)—The election of a Salvadoran president and vice president concluded today at 1700 [2300 GMT] amid violent clashes between the Army and the FMLN.

The violence forced several polling tables to close earlier than scheduled.

Seven political parties competed for the Presidency: the ruling PDC, the rightist ARENA, the leftist CD, the National Conciliation Party, the Authentic Christian Movement, the Renewal Action Party, and the Popular Union.

It is expected that the Central Electoral Council will release initial results before midnight.

CD's Zamora on Elections

PA2003023789 San Salvador Canal Seis Television in Spanish 2317 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Interview with CD leader Ruben Zamora by unidentified reporter in El Salvador; place not given—live]

[Text] [Reporter] The polling tables closed approximately 20 minutes ago. We are now talking with CD Coordinator General Dr Ruben Zamora, who was in charge of the organization, logistics, and control of the voting tables for the CD. Dr Zamora, what is you opinion of the whole situation? What is the outlook for the elections? What are your predictions? This morning we talked with [CD vice presidential candidate] Dr Reni Roldan, but you might be able to add something else at this time.

[Zamora] I believe that... [changes thought] First, I want to express, on behalf of the CD, our condolences for Canal Doce's tragic loss of one of its workers. This is a loss for all of us. Returning to the elections, we believe we have fulfilled our mission. We established clear goals for the CD when we began the campaign, and I believe we have achieved those goals. Likewise, I feel frustrated. For example, today I had to present more than 40 reports of election irregularities to the Central Electoral Council [CCE]. These irregularities include the creation of voting tables that do not exist and the listing of ballots that do not exist—for example, voting table 6,424 with ballots numbered from 1,226,901 to 1,927,200 is not supposed to exist.

There is also what happened in Santa Ana: The ballot box was opened and the ARENA representatives let people who were not included on any other list vote there.

[Reporter] Do you have any idea of who is responsible for these mistakes? Is the CCE wholly responsible for this?

[Zamora] I do not think the CCE is not responsible for this mistake. I believe there has been a pattern in these elections, which are marked by ARENA's unacceptable arrogance. The Santa Ana incident is not the only case. I have a lot of reports from places where our people were simply not allowed to be members of the voting table board, department board, or municipal board. The same pattern was always followed: ARENA's representatives were always chosen instead. The ARENA people took over everywhere. We are really frustrated about this.

[Reporter] Doctor, you talk about your frustration yet you also said you feel satisfied because the CD has fulfilled its mission. How has the CD fulfilled its mission?

[Zamora] When we began the election process, we knew an election does not solve a country's problems. However, we set ourselves four goals:
1. Expand the CD's organization at the national level. We have certainly achieved this.
2. Create a process for the people's political education. I believe we have attained optimum results.
3. Create a process to mobilize the people concerning a political solution. We have attained considerable progress on this.
4. Attain enough votes to establish the CD as one of the three main forces in the country. I believe we have attained this.

[Reporter] You predicted you would get 12-15 percent of the vote.

[Zamora] I said in the double digits; that is, more than 10 percent.

[Reporter] Does this mean the other traditional groups that have tried to become the third force in the country—for example, the National Conciliation Party [PCN] and the Authentic Christian Movement [MAC]—have been disqualified, in your opinion?

[Zamora] I would not use the word disqualified.

[Reporter] In terms of becoming a third force?

[Zamora] Yes, I definitely believe that every election has proven that the PCN is decadent. Regarding the MAC, I believe it was merely an illusion of [Julio Adolfo] Rey Prendes and not the creation of a real party.

[Reporter] We talked with some candidates, and some of them said ARENA's victory was almost assured in the first round. Our specialist Norman Bohorquez said that if the low voter turnout trend continues, it was quite probable that ARENA would win. Do you share that idea?

[Zamora] I think the trend all day long indicates that ARENA has the lead. We cannot predict that trend will continue and that there will be a definitive winner. We must wait for the results. The situation is clear in San Salvador. Who votes in the morning? The middle and upper class; the rich people who vote for ARENA. More people will vote for the CD during the afternoon because the lower classes vote for the CD.

[Reporter] Would the afternoon voting change the trend that has been observed throughout the morning?

[Zamora] I believe it can change the results, insofar as precluding ARENA's victory in the first round. I have information from the interior that indicates that ARENA has a lead in all the places... [corrects himself] almost everywhere.

[Reporter] This allows for some speculation. If ARENA wins the first round with 50 percent of the vote plus 1, what is the CD's view of the country's political future?

[Zamora] The country's political future is determined by our ability to attain a solution to the armed conflict. I believe we have attained enormous progress in that struggle. The political solution is more legitimate now than before the election.

[Reporter] Does this mean the next president, regardless of which party he represents, would be bound to seek a political solution?

[Zamora] Of course! Look, the country cannot become obsessed with the elections. However, we know where the real power lies in El Salvador. We must refer to the real power if we want to attain a solution to the problems. I believe we have attained considerable progress in this concern. Everyone talked with everyone. ARENA may win the elections, but it has already talked with the FMLN. Another party may win the elections, but they have already talked with the FMLN. We have all talked among ourselves. I believe we have achieved considerable progress.

[Reporter] Referring to the FMLN: Shortly before the elections you issued an quote appeal unquote to the FMLN, saying a transport stoppage would harm the CD. You tried to persuade the FMLN to lift or lessen the effect of the stoppage. What are the effects of the transport stoppage?

[Zamora] We believed that the FMLN's transport stoppage would cause considerable damage to the CD, and it certainly has. I believe the CD has sustained the greatest damage, in terms of a lower vote count. The other parties that do not have the resources of the PDC and ARENA have also been affected. ARENA is the least affected by the stoppage. We are affected because we do not have the means to transport voters, and our chances are precluded by the lack of public transportation. Also, many people who decided to vote for the CD preferred to stay home and not vote—given the problems resulting from the stoppage and the people's fear.

[Reporter] Continuing with this analysis, did the FMLN make a political mistake when it decreed a stoppage?

[Zamora] The CD believes this was a political mistake and we have publicly said so. Otherwise we would not have told the FMLN that we thought it was necessary to lift the stoppage.

[Reporter] There is another thesis, based on FMLN commanders' statements: They say an ARENA victory was much more favorable for them given the possibilities of negotiating with a party that represents a true power.

[Zamora] The problem with this type of argument—that it is better to negotiate with ARENA because ARENA represents the interests of the private sector and the bourgeoisie and, therefore, it has something to bring to the negotiation table whereas the PDC had nothing to bring to the negotiation table... [changes thought] I cannot accept this. ARENA certainly has the advantage but this is not the only factor that determines whether or not one can sit down at the bargaining table, negotiate, and attain a political solution. A series of factors are also involved. I do not think it is appropriate to have preferences.

[Reporter] However, those preferences can predominate at a given time in politics. It was said that if it was necessary to hold a run-off election, this would provide a better chance of redefining the FMLN's position. What can we expect if there is a winner in the first round?

[Zamora] The FMLN would have no possibility of redefining its position. We also analyzed that possibility; that is, that a run-off election would give the FMLN a chance to redefine its proposal for a political solution to achieve peace. We are obviously interested in keeping that possibility open.

[Reporter] If you come in third, what will the CD do?

[Zamora] The CD is like a small plant; it is only 1 year old. It has grown, but it has grown even more during the elections. The CD must continue to grow. We must continue to struggle and unite the largest number possible of social and political groups to attain a negotiated solution to the conflict. Until this solution is attained, the CD has a responsibility to develop at the political level. We will continue to do this.

Journalists' Group on Deaths

PA2003022389 Buenos Aires REUTER in Spanish 2348 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] San Salvador, 19 Mar (REUTER)—Three journalists, one of whom worked for REUTER, were killed by the Armed Forces and a fourth was critically wounded today in events related to the violent Salvadoran elections.

A communique from the Association of Foreign Correspondents in El Salvador accused the Armed Forces of "being greatly responsible" for the incidents and demanded an impartial investigation and punishment for the culprits.

The deaths of Netherlander Cornell Lagrow and Salvadorans Roberto Navas and Mauricio Pineda de Leon occurred in confusing incidents at military roadblocks or during cross fires.

The association issued a "strong protest against the actions of the Armed Forces, which, according to preliminary reports, are greatly responsible for the deplorable events."

Lagrow "was wounded during a clash between the Army and the guerrillas," according to Douglas Mine, AP correspondent and an association official.

The incident occurred in San Francisco Javier, in the conflict-ridden southeastern Usulutan Department, where Lagrow and other journalists had gone when they learned the town had been taken over by leftist guerrillas early this morning.

The reporters "were with the guerrilla forces when an Army unit arrived and tried to reclaim the town," the association's communique states. Lagrow was critically wounded in the chest.

"The fact that he was wounded in combat is deplorable, but it is not a reason to condemn or criticize the Army" because correspondents "recognize and assume the risks involved in this type of coverage," the communique adds.

"The reprehensible thing is that the vehicle that evacuated the Netherlander journalist was the target of a 20-minute attack by an Air Force helicopter while it was leaving the town in search of help," the correspondents said.

The text of the communique clearly specified that the vehicle was adequately identified as belonging to the press and it carried white flags.

Air Force members shot 28-year-old Roberto Navas and 28-year-old Luis Galdamez, photographers who worked for REUTER, on Saturday evening while they were returning from work on a motorcycle.

Navas died instantly and Galdamez is recovering from lengthy surgery after being critically wounded in the back.

The association of journalists termed the Armed Forces Press Committee's [Coprefa] version of the incidents as false. Coprefa said the photographers did not heed the orders to stop at two successive roadblocks and were shot at a third.

The communique said: "We reject the Coprefa report because it is false. Galdamez has stated that they stopped at the first roadblock and identified themselves as journalists, showing valid credentials issued by Coprefa."

"The Armed Forces members at the second roadblock opened fire—without issuing orders to stop—on the motorcycle as they drove away," the association said, quoting Galdamez.

The incident occurred on Army Boulevard, approximately 1 km from the Ilopango Air Force Base on the outskirts of San Salvador.

Pineda de Leon, an audio worker at Canal Doce, was shot by the police at a roadblock near San Miguel, 140 km east of the capital.

The Armed Forces said he was traveling in a station wagon and failed to obey an order to stop.

"The journalists traveling (with Pineda) said there was no such order and that the firing came out of the blue," the correspondents said.

The correspondents' association said that in these three cases they determined "that the Armed Forces' actions were aimed at intimidating and scaring journalists."

Low Voter Turnout Reported

PA2003011089 Paris AFP in Spanish 2353 GMT 19 Mar 89

[By Arturo Gudino, special AFP reporter]

[Excerpts] San Salvador, 19 Mar (AFP)—Many voters apparently abstained from voting in today's Salvadoran presidential elections, which took place amid brutal violence that claimed the lives of three journalists and dozens of soldiers and guerrillas.

According to unofficial reports from polling station officials, most of the votes were cast at polling stations in the capital, where the voter abstention rate was 45 percent just 2 hours before the end of the elections.

According to media reports, the number of voters was significantly lower in the country's interior, where fighting between the Army and the guerrillas stained election day with blood. [passage omitted]

The Defense Ministry confirmed that the violence and extraordinary tension that characterized the Salvadoran elections resulted in the last-minute cancellation of voting in at least 8 of the 241 municipalities where voting was scheduled to take place.

Another 21 municipalities had been removed from the election at the decision of the Central Electoral Council [CCE], which believed it was impossible to have voting in areas controlled by the FMLN guerrillas.

In other towns, such as Santa Elena, Usulutan Department, polling stations had to be closed 3 hours after the elections began due to fighting between the Army and the guerrillas.

In San Martin, a large town 20 km north of San Salvador, the polling stations remained open this afternoon but they were deserted.

In Usulutan, a city of approximately 80,000 people, the polling stations closed at 1600, 2 hours before schedule, because of a lack of power, which is affecting 70 percent of the nation.

Sources of the leftist CD, which nominated Guillermo Ungo for president, noted that the low voter turnout reflects "the poor credibility that the people have and the effectiveness of the guerrilla boycott."

CD spokesmen said, however, that the voters' abstentionism favored the rightist ARENA, which nominated businessman Alfredo Cristiani for president.

"ARENA has stubborn and militant voters, and they have gone to the polls since the early morning. Therfore, they might even get 50 percent of the vote," CD leader Francisco Recinos noted. [passage omitted]

Despite the massive mobilization of goverment troops throughout the country, the FMLN guerrillas have reportedly succeeded in their strategy to sabotage the elections, if the low voter turnout predicted by the media is confirmed.

Hours before the polls opened, Salvadoran Foreign Minister Ricardo Acevedo warned Salvadorans that low voter turnout would decrease the legitimacy of the new government and could even prompt a coup d'etat.

CCE sources estimated that election results will be released at midnight on Sunday (0600 GMT), but in the event that none of the candidates receives 50 percent of the vote, there will be a run-off election on 30 April.

ARENA's Merino on Dialogue

PA2003040089 San Salvador Canal Seis Television in Spanish 0012 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Interview with ARENA vice presidential candidate Francisco Merino by unidentified reporter in San Salvador; live or recorded—broadcast in progress]

[Text] [Merino] ...an army of 15,000 men against an Army of 50,000 men. Why? Because there has been no decision, no willingness to end the war. President Duarte talked with the FMLN on several occasions yet he has failed. Why? Because he became estranged from the other political, economic, and social groups.

[Reporter] Will ARENA be willing to talk with the FMLN if it wins the elections?

[Merino] We have already stated this. Given the Christian Democratic Executive Branch's constant failures, we presented our national proposal for peace and liberty at the Legislative Assembly. Our proposal does not claim that ARENA will solve the war problem. We will try to attain a consensus among all the country's political, economic, and social groups so we may attain a firm and lasting peace—within a constitutional framework, of course.

I believe the FMLN has an opportunity—luckily for them—to put down their weapons. [Our government will be] a government that is strongly supported by the people, that was elected by a majority of the Salvadoran people, and that will never monopolize government duties. Quite the contrary, we will increase participation by all sectors; participation has been restricted by the Christian Democrats in recent years.

[Reporter] We thank you for visiting us during this special event for the news media and the Salvadoran people in general.

[Merino] Thank you; we are always at your service.

U.S. Embassy, Military 'Fraud'

PA2003011689 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0050 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] Preliminary reports about the electoral farce show that abstention is the winner. The Salvadoran people's categorical rejection of fraud is the winner on a day of the people's struggle. The Salvadoran people's struggle was expressed in all its various characteristics.

Attention: Radio Venceremos is beginning to receive reports about the fraud the U.S. Embassy and the top command are carrying out in a large part of the eastern region, especially in northeast and southeast El Salvador.

There were no elections in many municipalities. However, results are being reported for municipalities in which there were no elections. This is definite proof of the fraud that is being cooked up by the top command, the garrisons, and the U.S. Embassy.

Radio Venceremos will continue to report on this matter.

In the eastern region, the departmental and military chiefs have begun to stuff ballot boxes with votes for the PDC. This is occurring in towns where no elections were held. A big fraud is under way in the eastern region.

ARENA Victory Predicted

PA2003014589 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0054 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] We have visited approximately 56 percent of San Salvador's polling stations.

We have been to the Roosevelt, Bolivar, and Centenario Parks in an attempt to determine the probable outcome of the elections. In these elections figures are not that important. What really counts is whether we will have a run-off election or not. If there is no run-off election, it does not matter how many votes the winner receives [words indistinct]. We have estimated that a clear winner will emerge in the metropolitan area with 62 percent of the valid vote. About 65 percent of the 1,070,000 registered voters voted in San Salvador.

According to these estimates, the ARENA received 62 percent of the vote, or more than 500,000 votes. This would mean there will be no run-off election.

ARENA Members Celebrate

PA2003015689 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0057 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] San Salvador, 19 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—Hundreds of ARENA members are celebrating in downtown San Salvador tonight because of the victory of their presidential candidate Alfredo Cristiani in today's elections.

The ARENA members' euphoria is based on initial results in the capital, where ARENA seems to have a clear majority over the ruling PDC, whose candidate Fidel Chavez Mena is running second.

According to ARENA observers and election representatives, the initial count shows Cristiani has twice as many votes as Chavez Mena.

San Salvador is ARENA's main stronghold, while the PDC is stronger in the country's interior.

There are no official results yet. The elections ended at 1700 (2300 GMT).

ARENA Proclaims Victory

PA2003030489 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 0240 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] After receiving initial voting results, the far-right ARENA today proclaimed itself the winner of the Salvadoran presidential elections.

According to Salvadoran newspaper reports, Major Roberto D'Aubuisson, leader and founder of the party whose candidate is businessman Alfredo Cristiani, has said: "We have won. The margin is great enough. Cristiani will be president." Meanwhile, hundreds of followers of the party that already dominates the National Assembly, the Supreme Court of Justice, and San Salvador's mayorship celebrated at the party's headquarters in the capital.

Preliminary unofficial results that predict ARENA's victory confirmed opinion polls, but do not shed light on whether ARENA's victory will be absolute or if there will have to be a run-off election.

Rebels Laud 'Abstention' Victory

PA2003034689 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0245 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] The electoral farce has ended. On radio and television we already heard the euphoric cries of the ARENA followers proclaiming their victory. The electoral fraud has begun to show its real colors. The PDC has already said it is defeating ARENA in the interior, in those areas where the Salvadoran Armed Forces supervised the elections. However, ARENA's euphoric cries, the regime's propagandistic attempt to save its beaten pseudodemocratic process, and the fraudulent maneuvers cannot hide the real results of these elections: abstention, the people who did not vote.

According to the analysts who superficially cover the elections—those analysts who only pinpoint a winner—the legitimacy of these elections has been seriously questionable. They feel it will not be possible for the government that wins these elections to win enough votes to feel supported by, or representative of, the people.

Some foreign news agencies have said the turnout in many areas is way below what was predicted by the most pessimistic observers. Meanwhile, Rafael Moran Castaneda, presidential candidate for the National Conciliation Party, mentioned that abstention in Ahuachapan Department had been quite noticeable. We must add that we were not very active in Ahuachapan Department. Moran Castaneda seriously doubted that 50 percent of the voters had actually voted, and this level of abstention would lessen the importance and credibility of these elections.

The number of voting tables that were practically empty was high throughout the country. In San Salvador, abstentionism was clearly demonstrated by the Salvadoran people. Under these circumstances, we are sure that barely 30 percent of the voters actually voted.

Where then does the real triumph of this day of political and military struggle lie? Not at the headquarters of the so-called majority parties. The real winners are those who followed the orders of the FMLN and did not vote, those who cast a void ballot, those who struggled to make the elections a mechanism for peace, and those who will continue to struggle to achieve this objective. The triumph of these elections will be celebrated at the rebel camps, at the work centers, and at the schools; in all those areas where the people, in one way or another, expressed their rejection of these elections. This victory will further encourage the struggle to consolidate the unity of all the people to achieve peace.

Cristiani Claims Victory

PA2003055389 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0520 GMT 20 Mar 89

["Excerpt" of statement by ARENA presidential candidate Alfredo Cristiani in San Salvador on 19 March—recorded]

[Text] [Cristiani] We have, as I said earlier, reports from all the departments, and we can state that we have received reports from the main cities, including the department capitals and other large cities. This represents approximately 75 percent of the vote. The facsimile copies of the voting table reports and the telephone reports we have received indicate that we have received approximately 54 percent of the vote. If this trend continues, it would mean that our victory will be attained in the first round of the elections.

We have some municipalities that are facing problems because they are in conflict areas, but these are very small and we do not think they will substantially modify the returns. Therefore, we are pleased to state, in an unofficial and preliminary way, that the voting returns indicate we have attained more than 54 percent of the vote.

Official Results Due 21 Mar

PA2003121489 Paris AFP in Spanish 1001 GMT 20 Mar 89

[Text] San Salvador, 20 Mar (AFP)—The Central Electoral Council (CCE) of El Salvador will announce on 21 March the official results of the presidential elections held on on 19 March, a CCE member told AFP today.

"We are not yet able to announce official results, because we must have the reports from each voting table, which is impossible because of the power outage in the country," the ARENA delegate to the CCE, Jorge Diaz, reported.

Diaz said that as of midnight last night the CCE had received only 2 percent of the voting tables' reports.

However, Diaz said that according to his party's computation center, the results would be the following: ARENA, 58.68 percent; PDC, 34.7 percent; CD 2.84; and the rest of the groups participating, less than 1 percent each.

Guatemala

Reportage on Rumors of Coup Against Cerezo

Armed Forces Rule Out

PA1703170789 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1630 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Guatemala City, 17 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—The Guatemalan Army "will not promote a coup d'etat" against President Vinicio Cerezo, because it respects the democratic process and the way of life chosen by the Guatemalan people.

The Armed Forces, in a document sent to ACAN-EFE today, "categorically" denied a movement to overthrow Cerezo had taken place last week. Cerezo took power on 14 January 1986, following 2 decades of military rule.

The document adds that rumors on an alleged military coup were spread by "extremist groups dissatisfied with the government, groups that try to create instability among the population and the subsequent destabilization of the government to undermine the democratic gains achieved by the people."

The Guatemalan Army said the observance of the Constitution "will not lead to a coup d'etat and will ensure the Guatemalans' way of life is respected, thereby contributing to the strengthening of democracy."

Guatemalan Defense Minister General Hector Alejandro Gramajo, in an interview on 30 August 1988, told ACAN-EFE President Vinicio Cerezo "will end his term in office."

"The Army supports and will continue to support this government, because the people have made it legitimate," Gramajo said emphatically. He rejected any idea of the military's direct intervention in Guatemala's political life.

Army Spokesman Denies Rumors

PA1703214989 Guatemala City PRENSA LIBRE in Spanish 17 Mar 89 p 6

[Text] Guatemalan Army spokesman Colonel Luis Arturo Isaacs Rodriguez yesterday insisted that the rumors about an attempted coup d'etat last week are untrue.

Col Isaacs Rodriguez sent a note to our director and general manager, journalist Pedro Julio Garcia, and added: "The Guatemalan Army feels it is necessary, for the people's tranquillity, to clearly state that the rumors are not true. Unhappy extremist groups are trying to create a sense of anxiety among the people in general and, in so doing, to destabilize the government and destroy the democratic progress achieved by the people."

He also said that "citizens must have complete faith that the Army, in abiding by the Constitution, will not allow this and that it will remain alert to ensure respect for the life style chosen by the Guatemalans and work to support democracy."

URNG Claims 100 Army Casualties in Early March

PA1703030189 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2153 GMT 12 Mar 89

[Text] Guatemala City, 12 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—The Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity [URNG] reported today that they inflicted more than 100 casualties on the Army during clashes that occurred over the past 10 days.

The URNG reported that its forces ambushed a military patrol in Patulul, Suchitepequez, in southern Guatemala on 5 March. During this action, three soldiers were killed.

A URNG military report released today in Guatemala City states that its forces attacked a military detachment, harassed a military patrol, and occupied several sections of the highway in the northern Peten Department. The URNG conducts operations in several Guatemalan departments. According to the guerrillas, they inflicted an undetermined number of casualties on the Guatemalan Army during these actions.

The rebels reported other clashes in the Tajumulco Volcan area in the central Chimaltenango Department and in the southeastern San Marcos Department. During these clashes, the rebels report inflicting 99 "confirmed" casualties on the Army. Until now, the Guatemalan Armed Forces have not issued any statement on these alleged clashes.

Nicaragua

Ortega Speaks on Country's National Dialogue

PA1803000689 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 2101 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Speech by President Daniel Ortega Saavedra; place not given—live]

[Text] Your Eminence Cardinal Miguel Obando, members of the National Reconciliation Commission, members of the Diplomatic Corps, representatives of parties and political groups who have been summoned to this meeting, comrades of the government cabinet:

Today, 17 March, we have invited representatives and leaders of various groups and political parties to our country to review some issues that the government has brought up in the discussions that took place during two rounds of talks.

First, I want to recall that between the signing of the Esquipulas agreement on 7 August 1987 and the Declaration of El Salvador on 14 February 1989, a series of meetings took place with political parties and groups within a multilateral framework. We called for a national dialogue on 13 September 1987, meaning immediately after the Esquipulas II agreements were signed. The national dialogue officially began on 15 October 1987 with the participation of 16 political parties and groups.

Five sessions were held as of 26 April 1988—with a partial suspension during January and February—and we could not even manage to approve the agenda for the dialogue. A preliminary 11-point agreement was signed on 21 March 1988, following 2 days of meetings with eight political parties. On 26 April, the dialogue was suspended by the opposition parties. This has been our experience thus far with multilateral dialogues. This proves that the Nicaraguan Government was willing to hold a multilateral dialogue and did sponsor a multilateral dialogue, but the results of this multilateral dialogue were very poor.

On 14 February, a document—which you all know about—was signed in El Salvador. The Central American presidents decided to give a new impetus to the peace plan for the Central American region. It is appropriate to mention that the document signed in El Salvador never mentions holding a national dialogue, not even a bilateral dialogue. In fact, the Nicaraguan Government assumes the responsibility of carrying out certain reforms.

The Central American presidents' joint declaration says—in the section I am referring to—that [Ortega begins to read from Central American presidents joint declaration issued following their 13 and 14 February 1989 meeting in El Salvador] the presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras [words indistinct] willingness stated by the constitutional president of Nicaragua, Daniel Ortega Saavedra, of carrying out a democratization and national reconciliation process in his country within the framework of the Esquipulas II agreements and in accordance with, among other things, the following actions: Once the reforms to the Electoral Law and the laws regulating the expression of thought, information, and public opinion are carried out, to guarantee the parties' political organization and actions in the broadest sense, the first 4-month period will be opened for the preparation and organization, etc. [Ortega concludes reading from joint declaration] However, it is clear from this that it does not behoove the government to take these steps. How? This is in the hands of the government. It does not say that the

government is obliged to call a multilateral dialogue or a bilateral dialogue to take these steps. The government committed itself to taking these steps at the presidents meeting.

It is important to emphasize that in the substantive part of the document, deadlines are set for the steps to be taken by the Nicaraguan Government. The document written in El Salvador, in Costa del Sol, says: Amendments must be made to the Electoral Code and to the laws regulating freedom of thought, information, and the freedom to express one's opinions publicly in such a way that the organization and political [word indistinct] of the parties will be broadly guaranteed. The period for making the amendments extends from 14 February—which was the day we signed the agreement—to 25 April.

In other words, the Nicaraguan Government has a 25 April deadline by which to carry out these reforms. There is a deadline following that which encompasses an initial 4-month period for the parties' preparatory work, organization, and mobilization, which extends from 15 April to 25 August. Immediately after that, [words indistinct] there is a new 6-month period of political activity, after which elections will be held for president, vice president, representatives to the National Assembly, municipal authorities, and [representatives to] the Central American Parliament. This runs from 25 August to 25 February.

To carry out such an important point in the agreements, I felt that it was advisable to call the political parties and groups to meetings before and after the meeting in El Salvador. I wanted them to know—before the meeting in El Salvador—what initiatives the Nicaraguan Government would be taking to El Salvador. At the same time, the Nicaraguan Government wanted to take into account the opinions and criteria of the political parties and groups.

Later, after the meeting in El Salvador, I felt that it was advisable to call all political parties and groups without exception to bilateral meetings in order to inform them officially about the agreement signed in El Salvador, the commitments that the Nicaraguan Government acquired through it, and the Nicaraguan Government's interest in learning the opinion of the political parties and groups on the proposals on amendments to the law on elections, amendments to the law on the media, and other actions which the government was bound to take following the initiative presented by the Nicaraguan Government at the meeting of Central American presidents on 14 February in El Salvador.

Therefore, I held bilateral meetings with 14 political parties and groups from 7 February until 13 March. The political parties and groups that participated in these bilateral talks—which were bilateral because when two people or two groups meet to talk with one another one holds a dialogue—were the Popular Social Christian Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Social Christian Party led by Eric Ramirez, the Democratic Conservative Party led by Clemente Guido, the Independent Liberal Party-National Unity, the Marxist-Leninist People's Action Movement, the Revolutionary Workers Party, the Central American Unionist Party headed by (Blanca Rojas), the Nicaraguan Socialist Party, the Social Christian Party headed by Agustin Jarquin, the Liberal Party, which is known by the acronym PALI, the Conservative Democratic Party led by Hernaldo Zuniga, the Nicaraguan Conservative Party led by Miriam Arguello, and the Central American Unionist Party led by Alejandro Perez Arevalo.

All in all, 14 parties and political organizations participated in these bilateral meetings. In my opinion, these bilateral conversations proved to be positive. They led to direct, open, constructive talks. All of the leaders who participated in these meetings expressed a desire to contribute to a peaceful solution to our country's problems. The parties and political groups that failed to participate in the meetings simply did not wish to do so because all the parties and political organizations in Nicaragua, all 19 of them, were invited, including the FSLN [Sandinist National Liberation Front]. There are 18 opposition parties and political organizations, 14 of which participated in the talks.

The parties and political organizations expressed their positions, and they went beyond the agreements made in El Salvador. Of course a meeting, a dialogue, is for listening purposes and not for closing the agenda to certain issues. The government was especially interested in knowing the parties' points of view regarding actions the government must carry out. We did not want to carry out these actions unilaterally without first talking with the party leaders. We did not want to send legal reforms to the National Assembly without first knowing the political parties' opinions.

The government has a positive view of the various proposals and ideas expressed by the parties and political organizations. Other opinions were expressed, which are in our hands and have been made public. These opinions refer to the constitutional reform proposals made by the parties. We noted their concerns but, of course, we referred specifically to the agreements made in El Salvador. Some parties fully support the El Salvador agreements; others partially support them, expressing the view that the agreements are very limited, that they should have included other types of demands. Still other parties reject the agreements, feeling that they limit and hinder the Nicaraguan people's sovereignty and self-determination.

We received constitutional reform proposals from political organizations that feel the Constitution is too markedly leftist, while other parties feel the Constitution is liberal, bourgeois, and requires reforms in the other direction, toward the left. In other words, we heard a number of opinions. When we explained to the political leaders other substantive points that were agreed upon in El Salvador, there were many different reactions.

I am going to cite two paragraphs of substantive points. The first one states that in accordance with the Nicaraguan president's proposal, and the Honduran president's initiative, the Central American presidents pledge to prepare, within a period no greater than 90 days, a joint plan to voluntarily demobilize, repatriate, or relocate members of the Nicaraguan Resistance and their relatives in Nicaragua or third countries.

To this end, they will request the expert advice of UN specialized organizations. There was also another paragraph which said to contribute (?to the guidelines) for the voluntary demobilization, relocation, and repatriation of Nicaraguans directly or indirectly involved in armed activities and who are in Honduran territory, the Nicaraguan Government has decided to release those prisoners who fall under the categories established by the Inter-American Human Rights Commission.

This [words indistinct] also became a controversial issue. Several parties stated that they did not agree with a partial release of prisoners. They said there should be total amnesty for all former Somozist guards and for all Nicaraguans arrested for their involvement in counterrevolutionary activities. Meanwhile, we also met with opposition leaders from several other political parties and organizations who objected to the pardon and the amnesty as long as it did not [words indistinct] the process of demobilization of contras from Honduran territory. Moreover, they stated that the former Somozist guards' release should not be a part of this process [of demobilization], because the guards had become a part [words indistinct] of a historic process that did not fit into the process of negotiation that was made possible after the triumph of the Nicaraguan revolution.

The Nicaraguan Government is fulfilling the agreements made in El Salvador. It is also aware [words indistinct] in Central America. It is not possible to implement the peace plan all at once in all of the countries of Central America. Each Central American country has very specific conditions that limit the full implementation of the peace plan. No Central American country has been able to fulfill the peace plan. In Costa Rica—a country whose president has promoted the peace plan and has deservedly received the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts—the Legislative Assembly has not yet succeeded in ratifying the Central American Parliament. The other four Central American countries have already approved and ratified the parliament. [Words indistinct] we have had difficulties and limitations regarding the complete fulfillment of the peace plan. Aware of these limitations, acting [words indistinct], and willing to continue promoting peace and [words indistinct], we reached this agreement in El Salvador on 14 February. We are [words indistinct] and (?aware) of this agreement.

This morning, at this important meeting, those of us who were there presiding over this ceremony were prisoners on several occasions of the Somozist guards. We were tortured by the Somozist guards. We saw our brothers, our comrades, and our relatives murdered by the Somozist guards. We were there, in yet another act of generosity of the Nicaraguan revolution, freeing [words indistinct] 1,897 [as received] former members of the Somozist guard.

In these bilateral meetings, several remarks were made regarding the point we adhered to in the El Salvador statement. This point deals with the Electoral Law amendments, for which a deadline had originally been set for 25 April. Another deadline has been set, this time for 25 August, which coincides with the 25 February 1990 general elections. I would like to refer to this during this meeting and report to the Nicaraguan people and to the representatives of the political parties and organization leaders that we regard several proposals that were made during the meeting to be positive. These proposals, dealing with amendments to the electoral and news media laws, will be sent to the National Assembly for discussion.

The proposed amendments that I have to take to the National Assembly for discussion deal with the following issues:

1. the date of the elections, which are scheduled for 25 February 1990

2. formation of the Supreme Electoral Council

3. formation of regional councils and voting boards

4. election of members of the Political Parties Council

5. requirements for the formation of new political parties in the country and the legal status of the existing political organizations

6. length of the electoral campaign

7. equal media access for all parties during the campaign

8. equal financing of electoral campaigns of all parties and determination of procedures so political parties can be financed in some way without violating the law

9. the electoral system regarding the distribution of benches at the National Assembly and the elimination of 15 percent of the number of benches

10. the presentation of revision and amparo writs at the Supreme Court of Justice regarding the Supreme Electoral Council and the Political Parties Council

11. votes of Nicaraguans living abroad

12. political campaigning throughout the country

13. reduction in the number of election board members

14. creation of regional vote counting centers

15. prohibition against using state-owned property during political campaigns

16. prohibition against using public employees as campaign workers

17. accepting as many observers as the OAS and United Nations consider necessary

19. [no number 18 as heard] willingness to send a proposal for a new media law to the national assembly

These are the points we summed up and that will be sent to the National Assembly within the next few days to be duly discussed. We will remain willing to listen to proposals by political parties and organizations on these points.

We feel that the effort put into these rounds of talks has been positive. We recognize the willingness and patriotism of the leaders of the political parties and organizations who have been participating in the talks. They have put the interests of the nation ahead of party interests. They know that any progress made helps achieve the peace being demanded by the Nicaraguan people, helps to prevent further bloodshed in our homeland, and helps to ensure the strengthening of the mixed-economy system and political pluralism in our country.

This afternoon, feeling sure that the Nicaraguan political parties, political leaders, and religious leaders support peace and are against war, I must urge the U.S. Government, President George Bush, and the U.S. Congress to keep today's congressional discussion on humanitarian aid for the counterrevolutionary forces in Honduran territory within the framework of the agreement and joint declaration signed by the Central American presidents in El Salvador. I ask the U.S. Congress to respect the Central American presidents' decision. In a paragraph [of the Central American presidents' joint declaration] we clearly expressed the following: The Central American presidents firmly reiterated their support for point five of the Esquipulas agreement. This clause requests that the governments within and outside the region that openly or secretly provide aid to irregular forces or insurrectional movements in the region immediately stop providing any aid, excluding humanitarian aid contributing to the goals of the Esquipulas document.

Furthermore, the Esquipulas document stipulates that there is a 90-day deadline for providing humanitarian aid. The Honduran Government proposed this deadline as a time frame within which to put together a joint plan for the voluntary demobilization, repatriation, or relocation in Nicaragua or in third countries of counterrevolutionaries in Honduran territory.

We share the grief and suffering of the Nicaraguan mothers whose sons have been abducted. I appeal to the U.S. Government to release the Nicaraguans kidnapped by counterrevolutionary forces in Honduran territory. The National Reconciliation Commission, together with a group of Legislative Assembly representatives, are currently planning a trip to Honduras to make efforts in that direction.

I must add, however, that today, while these Nicaraguan mothers have had the satisfaction of finding out that their sons are safe and sound, despite having been members of the Somozist guard and having committed crimes against the Nicaraguan people, thousands of Nicaraguan mothers cannot be reunited with their sons because their sons were murdered by mercenary forces. Other Nicaraguan mothers cannot be reunited with their sons because their sons were kidnapped by mercenary forces.

On behalf of our people, and on behalf of the God we all claim to believe in, I demand that the U.S. Government seriously support the peace effort the Central American presidents are making, toward which the Nicaraguan Government, for its part, is adopting measures. Thank you.

Government Releases 1,894 Somozist Guards

PA1703173389 Paris AFP in Spanish 1709 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Managua, 17 Mar (AFP)—The Nicaraguan Government released 1,894 pardoned former Somozist guards this morning. The prisoners had been in jail since the triumph of the Sandinist revolution in July 1979.

OAS Secretary General Joao Baena Soares accompanied Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega during the release of the former Somozist guards at Tipitapa Modelo Jail, 25 km from Managua.

Nicaraguan Interior Minister Commander Tomas Borge and Managua Auxiliary Bishop Bosco Vivas, representing Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, also attended the release of the prisoners.

The release of the prisoners—given pardons approved by the Nicaraguan National Assembly on 15 March—is the result of a commitment made by President Daniel Ortega at the Central American presidential summit held in El Salvador in mid-February.

Further on Guardsmen Release

PA1703180189 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1734 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Report by Roberto Gonzalez Rocha]

[Text] The ceremony at the Jorge Navarro penitentiary center has ended. Decree No 044 through which 1,894 former Somozist guardsmen were pardoned has been read read.

Currently, the relatives and the former guardsmen are boarding the 50 buses that came to take them to their different places of origin. There were 4,000-5,000 persons here, at least 2 relatives for every former guardsmen who was released from the Tipitapa penitentiary center.

President Daniel Ortega Saavedra, Interior Minister Tomas Borge Martinez, Vice President Sergio Ramirez Mercado, OAS Secretary General Joao Clemente Baena Soares, Msgr Juan Bosco Vivas, representing Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, members of the National Assemby's human rights commission, government officials, and ambassadors accredited in our country were present here.

Another activity has ended in which the revolutionary government once again lays the groundwork aimed at achieving lasting peace in accordance with the Esquipulas II agreements, the Alajuela meeting, and the Central American presidential summit held in El Salvador last February.

A total of 1,894 former Somozist guardsmen were released, 850 of which did not work during their sentence at the Jorge Navarro penitentiary center in Tipitapa.

Pardoning Decree Issued

PA1703213589 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1950 GMT 17 Mar 89

["Text" of decree pardoning former Somozist guardsmen; read by Information and Press Minister Manuel Espinoza at the Jorge Navarro Penitentiary in Tipitapa on 17 March—recorded]

[Text] The president of the Republic of Nicaragua announces to the Nicaraguan people that the National Assembly of the Republic of Nicaragua states the following:

1. The Somozist National Guard, founded in 1927 as a result of the U.S. intervention in Nicaragua, was responsible for a huge number of crimes against humanity, as proven in 1978 by the Inter-American Human Rights Commission, CIDH.

2. The joint declaration signed by the Central American presidents during their 13 and 14 February 1989 meeting in El Salvador states that the Nicaraguan Government has decided to release prisoners as its contribution to the creation of conditions for the demobilization, relocation, or repatriation of Nicaraguans who have been involved in direct or indirect armed activities and who are currently located in Honduran territory.

3. To comply with the joint declaration signed by the Central American presidents in El Salvador, it is necessary to grant a pardon to the former national guardsmen, who were duly tried and sentenced for committing crimes against the Nicaraguan people.

In exercising its authority, the Nicaraguan Government has issued the following pardon-granting decree:

1. To grant a pardon for the major offense [word indistinct] to a list that will be read subsequently;

2. The relevant authorities will comply with this decree by releasing the beneficiaries as soon as the decree is in effect;

3. This decree shall be in effect as soon as it is published in any mass media, and it will be subsequently published in the Official Gazette.

Issued in the sessions hall of the National Assembly on 14 March 1989, the year of the 10th Anniversary [of the Nicaraguan revolution], by Leticia Herrera, acting president of the National Assembly; and Rafael Solis Cerda, secretary of the National Assembly. Therefore, let it be promulgated and executed.

[Signed] Daniel Ortega Saavedra, president of Nicaragua

Managua, 15 March 1989, the year of the 10th anniversary

D'Escoto on Contra Contacts, U.S. Policy

PA1803194389 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1850 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Managua, 18 Mar (EFE)—Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto said today that the Nicaraguan Government and the contras have not had "any contacts" to discuss the anti-Sandinist rebels' repatriation and reintegration into civilian life.

D'Escoto told EFE that the Nicaraguan Government has nothing to talk about with the Nicaraguan Resistance [RN] Directorate as an organization. He added that the contras' repatriation will be handled "individually" with each rebel.

According to the foreign minister, the contra problem now depends on Honduras and the Central American presidents, who on 14 February agreed to draft a plan within 90 days for the contras' demobilization.

He added that, up to now, Nicaragua has not received any specific proposal for the contras' demobilization, adding that he hoped Honduras will present one at the Central American foreign ministers meeting in San Jose, Costa Rica, in late March.

On another subject, the foreign minister said "there has been no response" to the Nicaraguan Government's "goodwill gestures" toward the Bush administration; for example, Managua is no longer rejecting or delaying visas for U.S. diplomats. D'Escoto added: "If there has been a response, we have not noticed it."

He also said there had been no direct contacts or attempts to arrange a dialogue between the new U.S. Administration and the Managua government since Bush took power.

D'Escoto said it was "regrettable" that Bush had asked the U.S. Congress for new "humanitarian" aid for the anti-Sandinist rebels. In D'Escoto's opinion, this is "evidence that the United States is continuing its imperialist policy toward Central America."

RN's Cesar Announces Plan To Return to Managua

PA1703143789 Paris AFP in Spanish 0837 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Washington, 16 Mar (AFP)—Nicaraguan Resistance [RN] leader Alfredo Cesar today announced he is planning to return to Nicaragua to join the political struggle to "drive the Sandinists out of power." He denied, however, any intention of seeking the presidency in next February's elections.

Cesar served the Sandinist government as Central Bank director but later joined the armed rebels. He is currently one of the seven members of the RN Directorate. Cesar told a group of newsmen he felt "the politics of exile" have ended in Nicaragua, adding that it is necessary to "test" Managua's promises of democracy.

Nevertheless, RN spokesman Bosco Matamoros condemned Cesar's decision, terming it "premature." The RN spokesman also felt the decision is "incompatible" with the RN Directorate's position.

Matamoros said the RN demands tripartite meetings among the Nicaraguan Government, the domestic opposition, and the contras "to work out the ground rules" for the elections. Cesar's announcement "undermines RN policies," Matamores noted.

Cesar voiced his support for U.S. President George Bush's policy of seeking bipartisan support to try to maintain the contras as a "cohesieve but nonbelligerent" force in their camps in Honduras until it is clear there will be no "reneging" on the Sandinists' promise to hold "free elections."

Cesar virtually removed the RN from the political scene by announcing he believes he can return to Nicaragua in the 2d half of May. Cesar said he assumes that by that time the discussions "between the Sandinists and the domestic opposition" will provide sufficient guarantees regarding the Nicaraguan Government's plans to create a "genuinely pluralist" system.

Cesar added that he did not have any intention of seeking the Presidency. Instead, he plans to urge all opposition forces to rally around a "national figure" who is above partisan infighting. [passage omitted]

Communique Says Harassment by Honduran Troops

PA1703171489 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1700 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Defense Ministry communique]

[Text] At 1640 on 16 March, Honduran soldiers harassed, with 81-mm mortar fire, the border area of (El Guanzapo), west of Teotecacinte, Nueva Segovia Department.

During the month of March, Honduran soldiers have harassed various border posts, mainly in Military Region 1.

Isssued in Managua on 17 March 1989.

Public and Foreign Relations Directorate of the Defense Ministry.

Panama

Noriega Speaks at Military Graduation Ceremony

PA1703204389 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 1919 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Speech by General Manuel Antonio Noriega, commander in chief of the Panama Defense Forces, "a few minutes ago," in Chitre, Herrera Province, on the occasion of the graduation ceremony of special operations troops at the 4th Military Region garrison—recorded]

[Text] With the presence of your instructing commanders, we see we have opened today's graduation ceremony of military command troops—which in other countries is an activity only open to officers—to the community, children, and women. We have been doing this from the times of Martin Gonzalez—a man who inaugurated and undertook projects and got involved with the community—until now with current Military Zone Chief Major Marxio Herazo. This is done because the Panama Defense Forces [FDP] have nothing to hide; there are no Cubans, Libyans, or anyone else from any other countries. Those wearing beards are doing so at Captain Gonzalo Gonzalez' behest. There are no Cubans here; we do not need foreigners to train in our own country. We are an active, professional, and chiefly a Panamanian and nationalist FDP. That is what the gringos and the gringo-lovers [gringueros] fear. [applause]

The soldiers' training, which we have imparted and are imparting on the Dignity Battalion members to defend the fatherland truly and effectively as men and women, is part of our progress toward 1999. It represents the contribution of defense forces that are not solely devoted to training operations but also to developing the community and sharing the peasants's problems regarding water, roads, and schools. This FDP and this commander will not resign for them, even if the the opposition continues wailing [applause], even if the opposition continues wailing.

Just like the wind blows away a green juice can, the wind will blow away other green ones. [referring to the Christian Democratic Party's green star symbol] [applause]

What Colonel Arauz said summarizes the military part and the truly sentimental and real part that reflects what we all have inside: Stop threatening us; stop threatening and taking pictures of public employees; stop telling them they will be fired. Once you begin threatening, it shows that you are lost. In a card game or a domino match, the one who turns over the table is the one who was losing the game. [applause] If they are scared, not even the dogs will help them. [applause] Not even the dogs will follow them, gentlemen. So do not waste money on dogs, because they are not going to follow. [applause].

We reiterate here to the communities, to the Herrera Province community, to peasants, to the humble men of this land, to government employees that they need not fear; there will be no transfer of command or change or backing down in this garrison or in the FDP when dealing with the opposition. [applause]

It is time they knew that. They must stop threatening us or provoking us, because they will force us come forth and express our ideas. Until now, we have been respectful, doing our work. However, they must not pick on us; they must stop picking on us, or they will know who we are.

I say this to the communities, friends, and positive and truly Christian men—not to the demagogues who demonically use the psalms, turning them against the Christian faith. [applause] Regarding witchcraft, there are no psalms with witchcraft, gentlemen. Jesus Christ never practiced witchcraft. His psalms were profoundly philosophical. [applause]

They continue searching for pieces of clothes and underwear and practicing witchcraft, but witchcraft will not give them votes. You may vote, because our people already voted; they voted against colonialism, being a colony, and imperialism, and in favor of a free and sovereign people without gringo-lovers and gringos in 1999! [applause, shouts].

Opposition Announces Government Plan

PA1703190389 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1720 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Panama City, 17 Mar (ACAN - EFE)—The Panamanian opposition has announced a government plan that will attempt to gain the private sector's confidence, reach a cooperation agreement with the military corps, reactivate the economy with international aid, and pay the foreign debt "according to real payment possibilities."

After a meeting to collect funds that lasted until early this morning, the opposition presidential slate candidates outlined an economic reactivation plan they will implement if they reach power after the upcoming 7 May elections.

Guillermo Endara, the Civic Democratic Opposition Alliance's [ADOC] presidential candidate, stated: "I know my government will have to face national protest demonstrations because of the many wrongdoings that have accumulated" in the 20 years of government under the "revolutionary process."

ADOC vice presidential candidate Ricardo Arias Calderon said the opposition will nevertheless try to win domestic and foreign confidence through a respect for government institutions.

Arias Calderon talked about cooperation with the military corps to "reach an agreement on the new role of the Panama Defense Forces [FDP]," whom we "do not want to humiliate or disband." However, Arias warned the agreement would include present FDP Commander General Manuel Antonio Noriega's "retirement."

According to Arias Calderon, the new government would promote international cooperation, especially in America, Europe, and Asia. He said that, contrary to what the present government has done, the new government would practice a policy of "transparency" in its public administration.

Endara foresees a difficult future if he reaches power, but he blamed this on the present government, calling it a "squanderer." He said that "no government has received so many loans, donations, taxes," and other revenues as the present one and added: "I will be the victim of a situation created by corruption and incompetence."

Starting immediately, Endara will try to avoid the country's social collapse by forming a commission to be called "Starting Right Now," which will study the situation and propose urgent measures that must be taken "to counter hunger and unemployment."

Endara's government promises to recognize the Panamanian foreign debt, which is estimated at more than $4 billion.

However, he warned payments on servicing the debt would be "in keeping with the real possibilities and without sacrificing economic and social development, political stability, and our people's social achievements."

Endara warned: "Credit institutions and industrialized countries will have to assume part of the responsibility for the accumulation of this debt by absorbing part of it."

Until foreign capital levels recover, we would promote a foreign financial aid program," he pointed out. [no opening quotation marks as received]

The agricultural sector is a "priority," Endara said. Thus, he would request foreign technical advice to achieve food self-sufficiency and eliminate imports. He promises to distribute land title deeds and diversify production in an open economy.

The areas of housing and construction, commerce and industry, and tourism, which have been suffered heavily with the current crisis, would receive incentives, investments, and improvements; they would be revived, Endara pointed out.

He also promised the feared mass firings of public employees would not take place. He reaffirmed their work and political independence would be respected regardless of party affiliation.

Endara proposed the upgrading of and a possible lowering of the prices of public services such as telephone, water, electricity, and collective transportation.

As for the Panama Canal, Endara pointed out he would demand the carrying out of maintainance and improvement works on the interoceanic waterway, compliance with the Torrijos-Carter treaties, and the return of the Canal to Panama in December 1999.

As for the banking sector, whose reliability has been severely affected by the economic crisis, a plan has been drafted to regain the trust of local and international depositors, the presidential candidate explained.

At the same time he promised his government "would never print paper currency" of its own, Endara committed himself to consolidating national credit organizations and issuing legislation on bonds and other long-term instruments "to bring us out of the crisis."

Only Invited Election Observers To Be Recognized

PA1803222289 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2125 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Panama City, 18 Mar (ACAN-EFE)— For the 7 May presidential elections, the Panamanian Government will recognize only international observers who have been invited by the Electoral Tribunal to act in that capacity.

According to a communique issued today, the government noted that this measure is intended to prevent people not authorized by the Electoral Tribunal from meddling in election control or supervisory activities. The communique says that the Panamanian Government believes that "general elections are the correct means for selecting officials" and for peacefully settling political disputes.

The Panamanian people will go to the polls to choose a new president from two political coalitions, one progovernment and the other of the opposition. The new president will replace Manuel Solis Palma, the minister in charge of the Presidency.

Arrests of Washington, Miami Consuls Ordered

PA1803004889 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 2300 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] Sources close to the attorney general's office have reported that the prosecutor's office has ordered the arrest of Roberto Dominguez Cochez, who was acting Panamanian consul in Miami, Florida, and Ivonne Carrizo de Mendez, who was the Panamanian consul in Washington. According to the source, an investigation has begun based on charges of illegal usurpation of public functions brought by Foreign Relations Minister Eduardo Ritter to Attorney General Carlos Villalaz.

Dominguez Cochez and Carrizo de Mendez are part of the group of politicians who, sponsored by [Panamanian President] Eric Arturo Delvalle, took over the embassies and consulates in the United States. These persons illegally usurped the consul's position, excercised all consular functions, and charged consular fees for different services such as document authentication. These actions are illegal and punishable.

The sources added that the crime of usurpation of public functions is covered by Article 343 of the Penal Code, which states that exercising public functions without legal authorization—or the public employee who continues to excercise functions after he has received notification of his official suspension or firing—is an offense punishable for 6 months to 1 year in prison.

Rodriguez Cochez and Carrizo de Mendez are also charged with the crime of conspiring against state security. The source also reported that other consuls are being investigated for the same crimes.

PCC Warned About Fraudulent License Plates

PA1703234889 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2117 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] The Panamanian Government has warned Panama Canal Commission [PCC] Administrator Dennis McAuliffe that many Panamanian and U.S. PCC employees have obtained their license plates through fraudulent means and have not fulfilled the prerequisite of obtaining the tax clearance certificate that proves that they have paid their taxes to the National Treasury. In his note, Treaty Affairs Office Director Major Daniel Delgado said that those employees must refrain from using their vehicles until the U.S. Government pays the taxes withheld, or owed, or until those citizens have paid them on their own.

Meanwhile, PCC Deputy Administrator Fernando Manfredo advised the PCC employees of this situation and suggested that if they feel that this Panamanian Government warning represents a possible loss of their license plates or being fined or sanctioned, then they should leave their cars at home. Likewise, Manfredo said that the PCC has adopted new measures to ensure an adequate number of buses to provide transportation for the employees. He added that other options are being studied to help solve this very difficult problem that is affecting Panamanians and being caused by Panamanians.

In conclusion, Maj Delgado was advised that if these measures cause interruptions or interfere with the efficiency and operation of the canal, the United States will hold the Panamanian side solely responsible.

Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Meets Ritter

PA1703222889 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 2102 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Panama City, 17 Mar (DPA)—Panamanian Foreign Minister Jorge Eduardo Ritter and Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto met today in Panama City to discuss bilateral topics and the elections both countries will be holding soon.

Foreign Minister Ritter told DPA that today's meeting was not a formal one, but instead it was more like "entertaining a friend."

Ritter added that Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto was making a stopover for mechanical reasons on his way back to Nicaragua from New York.

Argentina

Machinea on Brady Plan, Debt Payments

PY1903211389 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1728 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Buenos Aires, 19 Mar (NA)—Central Bank President Jose Luis Machinea today stated that although "the pressures are great," Argentina "is not in a position to pay anything" on its foreign debt until after the elections.

Machinea added that the Brady Plan of aid to indebted countries "has fallen short of the Alfonsin proposal" on the same matter.

Machinea stated that the last payment made by Argentina to creditor banks of $270 million "was made during the last quarter of 1988." He added that current credits [acreencias] "amount to $2.5 billion."

In a lengthy report published today by the newspaper PAGINA 12, the Central Bank president admitted that because the presidential elections are so close, "right now we cannot open any negotiations" with our creditors. He added that the creditors themselves "think that we have to wait for the elections, so there is an implicit impasse."

Machinea denied, however, that he had accused Peronist economist Domingo Cavallo of having asked creditor banks to demand the payment of interest and not to grant new credits to the country." [quotation marks as received]

"What I said," he argued, "is that the Peronists had asked the international organizations to grant fewer credits to Argentina, but I explained that I did not know who specifically made this request, and I did not mention Cavallo's name."

He added that "in the committee of banks, a banker argued before some 40 or 50 people that they should demand the payment because the Peronist organization claims that allowing Argentina not to pay the interest will mean financing the UCR government policy and thus meddling in domestic affairs."

Returning to the Brady Plan, Machinea said that the initiative "seems to arrive a little late" because "the period of time in the hands of creditors is not the same as the debtors' time."

He said that the plan falls "very short of the Alfonsin Plan, which includes the reduction of interest, capitalization of interest, and a clearer role for the IMF and the World Bank." He added that "the Brady Plan is a bit more restricted, and we want to see how it will be implemented."

Asked about Alfonsin's position that Argentina will pay to the extent it receives fresh funds, Machinea stated that "the president has only reaffirmed what Argentina has stated on several occasions."

He stated: "This does not mean that the creditors will like it, because every time they hear it they become very nervous."

Machinea then decided to "sum up in six points the Argentine Government position on the Latin American foreign debt."

"First: The debt is absolutely unpayable; and under the current interest rates, so is the principal." [sentence as received] Second: "Latin America has already made a spectacular adjustment in its public sector and in its foreign accounts."

As an example he mentioned that "the Argentine trade balance has increased from a minus 3 percent of the Gross Domestic Product [GDP] in 1980 to a plus 3.5 percent of the GDP in 1988, which implies a proportional drop in investment and consumption."

Machinea added that "in the third place, this has affected the public sector, because 90 percent of the private debt has become public, so that debt service increased the fiscal deficit to 7 percent of the GDP."

"To understand what this means, we must remember that the payments for war damage imposed on Germany at Versailles" after World War I, "which ended up in hyperinflation and Nazism, only represented 6 percent of Germany's annual GDP."

Machinea added that "in the fourth place, there is no awareness among political parties, and especially among Latin American bourgeois societies, about the significance of the foreign debt."

He added: "In the fifth place, the short-term costs of a strategy that calls for breaking relations with the creditors are enormous, both economically and politically, for emerging and fragile democracies. I doubt that some countries could resist the economic and political pressures of the first 2 years of a strategy that calls for breaking relations with the creditors."

In the sixth place, Machinea stated that "the creditors have managed to split the debtors' front, while they have consolidated a single position." Regardless of this, he said, "today conditions are better due to the creditors' new attitude."

Machinea added that "it is essential" for the debtors to "join efforts. I do not say to form a club, but to reach an agreement on basic matters, such as the amount to be financed, the rate of interest, the 'onlending' [preceding word given in English], and capitalization."

He said: "In the medium and long terms, the solution is a moratorium, but the short term risks are too high. For this reason, our policy is to pay only half the interest, hoping that a political solution will be possible in due time."

Foreign Ministry on 'Indiana I,' Falklands

PY1703203589 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1856 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Buenos Aires, 17 Mar (NA)—Argentina has today expressed its gratitude to Brazil and Uruguay for their refusal to allow the ship "Indiana I" to dock. Argentina also reasserted its decision to try "to achieve a definitive agreement through negotiations" with Great Britain over the Malvinas conflict.

An Argentine Foreign Ministry communique states that the attitude of the two countries is an example "of fraternal solidarity" among Latin American countries. It adds that this solidarity is expressed at a time in which the Bahamian-flagged, British-owned, company is again trying to repeat its January trip.

Herewith, the text of the communique: "In view of the recent events related to the previous trip of the "Indiana I" ship, the Foreign Ministry wishes to express the following:

"The Argentine government is very satisfied with the position adopted by Brazilian authorities who refused to allow the ship to enter its ports. The Argentine government is grateful for this attitude, which is a practical demonstration of fraternal solidarity.

"The Brazilian government decision clearly upholds [words indistinct] position which states that a lasting solution to allow the stable development of the islands requires Argentina and the United Kingdom to resume direct negotiations as soon as possible on all pending issues concerning the Malvinas Islands issue.

"Our country also recognizes the position adopted by the Republic of Uruguay which, in keeping with the clear and valuable position it has upheld on this issue since the very beginning, decided not to provide port services to the "Indiana I."

"The Argentine government sees its actions stregthened through the decisions adopted by the two sister-nations, with which we have strong ties through an important integration project. Encouraged by them, by Latin American support, and by the support of the majority of nations of the international community, as expressed through international organizations, Argentina will continue to promote a firm, responsible, and persistant policy aimed at achieving a definitive agreement through negotiations on the Malvinas issue."

Brazil

Government Welcomes U.S. Plan on Debt

PY1703144589 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 16 Mar 89 p 21

[Text] Brasilia—Itamaraty has received with satisfaction the announcement that the foreign debt plan proposed by U.S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady was approved by President George Bush. A high diplomatic source said that this is very good because it is a clear signal that the most important country in the world is aware of the foreign debt problem.

The source said that with the approval of the plan it is clear that the debt issue is more than just a contract between debtors and creditors and that the relation between creditors and debtors is also affected by all types of fluctuations in the financial market.

Chile

Further Reportage on Poison Fruit Incident

Pinochet on 'Exaggerated' Ban

PY1703131589 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1030 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] President Augusto Pinochet said the measures that the United States adopted regarding the Chilean grapes are exaggerated. The president said that the poison found in two little grapes was enough to kill only a mouse. He added that the United States has used a tank to kill a fly.

President Pinochet made these comments during an unexpected visit to two fruit processing plants in the San Francisco de Mostazal and Rancagua. While visiting the plants, President Pinochet talked to the workers and reassured them that he is convinced Chile will overcome these difficulties.

[Begin recording] [Pinochet] This problem is not simple. It is a serious problem. I have faith, I have hope, and I am convinced, however, that the Americans will understand our situation and will realize that they have exaggerated measures to solve a minor problem. The amount of cyanide found was not enough to kill a mouse.

[Worker, interrupting] My husband and I make our living from the fruit at this time of year. What can we do? We have children at school. How can we support ourselves?

[Pinochet] I am studying the problem and looking for a solution.

[Reporter] Is it clear to you how this problem started? Do you have an opinion on the reasons for this act and the method used to carry it out?

[Pinochet] Yes, I have an opinion, but I cannot comment on it, because doing so would hinder the entire investigation.

[Reporter] Will Chile recover after this crisis?

[Pinochet] It may recover, but not immediately. We have already adopted the apropriate measures. I have met with the ministers and the businessmen; we are looking for a solution to this problem. It is not easy to find the solution, however, because this is a catastrophe, like an earthquake. We cannot adopt hasty measures. [end recording]

President Pinochet first visited Hernan Garces' vineyard in San Francisco de Mostazal. Then he visited the San Eugenio del Olivar property, near Rancagua, which belongs to Sergio Correa. After these two surprise visits, President Pinochet returned to Santiago.

Demonstrators Near U.S. Consulate

PY1703152689 Santiago Radio Portales in Spanish 1455 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Excerpts] At 0900 this morning leaders of the opposition went to the U.S. Embassy to offer their cooperation and to express their rejection of the U.S. measure against Chilean grapes.

Leaders of National Renewal, National Party, and Radical Democracy—parties linked to the government—will visit the U.S. Embassy this afternoon. [passage omitted]

There is great activity in front of the U.S. Consulate in Forestal Park. We have a report from Juan Rol in our mobile unit:

[Begin relay] It is incredible how many people involved in packing and processing grapes are here in front of the U.S. Embassy in Forestal Park. I would estimate that there are approximately 5,000 people eating grapes. The president of the Confederation of Agricultural Producers said: We are going to eat grapes until we get stomachaches. Many demonstrators here in front of the U.S. Consulate are distributing and eating grapes. About 20,000 boxes of grapes are expected to be distributed here. Trucks and pickups from various companies are supporting the demonstration. Julio Lagos, president of the Truck Owners Confederation, is also organizing demonstrations in other parts of the city. [passage omitted] [end relay]

Official Says 'Nearly Solved'

PY1703230589 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2121 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Washington, 17 Mar (EFE)—Chilean Foreign Minister Hernan Felipe Errazuriz said today that the crisis between his country and the United States over the poisoned Chilean grapes is nearly solved.

After a meeting with U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle, Minister Errazuriz said that "both sides, the United States and Chile, have worked hard to solve the problem. We have joined efforts and I believe that the crisis has been mostly overcome."

Announcing an important step toward the solution of a crisis that has seriously affected his country's economy, the Chilean foreign minister affirmed that "today is an important day for relations between Chile and the United States."

Vice President Quayle said that in these circumstances "the safety and the health of the American people are the paramount priority."

The Chilean foreign minister met with U.S. vice president for 15 minutes this afternoon in the White House. Minister Errazuriz had traveled to Washington in the company of Chilean Agriculture Minister Jaime de la Sotta as soon after learning that two grapes had been poisoned with cyanide.

He said that the situation will return to normal with time, and confirmed that U.S. inspectors will travel to Chile "to observe the strict new safety measures" which will avoid a repetition of episodes like the one that occurred last Monday when sales of Chilean grapes in the United States were banned.

Before returning to Chile, Errazuriz intends to meet with U.S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady "to explain him the impact of this crisis on our economy, and to see how our macroeconomic targets that have been seriously affected can still be maintained."

In an attempt to recover the U.S. people's confidence in Chilean grapes Minister Errazuriz pointed out hat that the fruit industry is 20 years old, adding that the safety measures adopted "are exceptionally strict, and we hope the U.S. people will again buy our fruit."

Official Declares Measures

PY1803013289 Santiago Radio Cooperativa Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Interior Minister Carlos Caceres has just announced economic measures designed to cope with the crisis brought about by the U.S. decision to ban imports of Chilean vegetables and fruits. This ban, as is now known, was lifted today.

The interior minister said that the government is being forced to modify the targets set in the program agreed on with the IMF to accomodate to the new circumstances. These measures will demand the use of the country's international reserves. The minister also announced that talks have been initiated with the World Bank to obtain credits to restore the position of our international reserves.

The following are the measures announced by the interior minister:

First: The appropriate government agencies will directly and preferentially cooperate with Chilean exporters through publicity campaigns abroad in order to recover the commercial position of our products in the international market.

Second: Employment programs will be implemented immediately in the areas most affected through labor-intensive investments on the order of 3 billion pesos.

Third: Agreements between the vegetable and fruit producing sectors and the financial sector will be facilitated so that producers and exporters can continue to carry on their activities normally and to meet their commercial and labor obligations.

In order to restablish as soon as possible the normal operation of the exporter sector, a bill will be prepared that will permit the state to offer an option of purchasing a given amount of export class fruits at a price that will make it possible to renew the activity of harvesting and processing in this industry, with the consequent effect on employment.

The interior minister also said that the reaction of the producers, the workers, the public, the authorities, and the sectors directly involved in the problem was at all times consonant with the long tradition of Chileans uniting in the face of challenges that nature, history, and economy periodically pose. He concluded by saying that Chile has the ability to stand up to tense setbacks and challenges.

Pinochet Curbs Criticism

PY1903200289 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1811 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] Santiago, 19 Mar (TELAM-ANSA)—General Augusto Pinochet has significantly curbed his criticisms against the United States, but has stepped up his attacks on the Chilean opposition, in connection with the temporary embargo that the United States levied on Chilean fruit exports.

"The duty of the U.S. Government is to protect the health of the population of their country," Pinochet said, in marked contrast to his statements a couple of days ago.

The Chilean chief executive called the embargo that the United States levied on Chilean grapes after cyanide was found in such grapes in Philadelphia "a serious measure." The embargo was partially lifted yesterday.

Pinochet said that the anti-U.S. reactions in Chile were "unfair" and reaffirmed that "the duty of the U.S. Government is to protect the population of their country."

The Chilean president also harshly criticized the opposition, especially those "who are underhandedly acting against our country," calling them "turncoats."

Pinochet asked: "How many of them have gone to the United States to beg, to whine, and to spread tales in order to stop loans to us? Has everyone forgotten that there is a gentleman who has been asking the United States not to give us any more loans?"

The Chilean president admitted that "the United States had been attacked" because "their initial measure was hasty. It amounted to using a tank to kill a flea. It was a harsh measure which had the immediate result of stopping our shipments of fruit abroad."

Pinochet emphasized, however, that the United States was not to blame, but rather "those who have requested a boycott against [words indistinct]."

Colombia

Government Minister, M-19 Reach Agreement

PA1803014589 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0002 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Report by Claudia Munoz and Annie Velasco]

[Text] A seven-point agreement was signed today by Government Minister Raul Orejuela and the 19 April Movement [M-19] in Santo Domingo, Cauca Department. God willing—and if the M-19 and the government both keep their word—today marks the beginning of the process of reincorporating the M-19 into civilian life. As of today, the M-19 has its own peace villa [Villa Paz] in Cauca Department. Claudia Munoz and Annie Velasco have the following report:

[Begin recording] [Munoz] A presidential committee composed of Government Minister Raul Orejuela Bueno, peace adviser Rafael Pardo, and Cauca Department Cesar Negret Mosquera, among others, arrived at Santo Domingo, Cauca Department, at 1130 this morning in a private helicopter. A large number of people welcomed the committee for several minutes. The committee members then crossed a suspension bridge and met for several minutes with the M-19 members.

Both groups jointly issued the Cauca declaration, which marks the beginning of a new phase in the peace process. To ensure that the peace process is not interrupted, the declaration designates a specific land area in which protection will be provided for the M-19, whose members will be returning to civilian life. The government appointed three special representatives to implement the plan for reincorporation: Tomas Concha, Hernan Hernandez, and Carlos Garzon, who will verify the compliance of the process.

Furthermore, 13 members of the M-19 who have no criminal records were introduced as those who will participate in the political talks. They are: Griserio Perdomo Velez, Rene Ramos, Jaime Perea Ramos, Fabio Alejandro Marino, Alberto Caicedo, Ruben Carvajalino, Alfonso Cabrera, Ramiro Lucio Escobar, Ivan Almarales, Hector Pineda, Jose Uritica, Adriana Velasquez Romero, and Edgar Molano.

Many people are wondering about you, Carlos Pizarro. Your family is considered to be well-off, yet you went off to live in the mountains. Now you are trying to leave the mountains. Does this mean that you are tired of a life of hardship and that you want to return to a life of comfort?

[Pizarro] I think the entire nation is tired of the violence it is experiencing. It is tired of the sources of violence in Colombia. I think we must make an effort to find a political solution. We are not in the mountains because we love them. We are not engaging in guerrilla activities as a mere sport. We are seeking political objectives. The main goal we have sought is democracy.

[Munoz] The next step in this peace process is the establishment of a working meeting on 1 April. From there, the government and the guerrillas will have 3 months to achieve a political agreement. [end recording]

Barco Address on Agreement

PA1803034289 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0128 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Speech by President Virgilio Barco from the Presidential Palace in Bogota—live]

[Text] Fellow countrymen: Colombia today took a major step toward reconciliation among Colombians. As was foreseen in the peace initiative I proposed to the country on 1 September 1988 and after several conversations with government spokesmen, hundreds of guerrillas and the M-19 General Command have relocated to Toribio municipality in Cauca Department. The presence of government authorities at that site is being maintained. The M-19 continues to honor its unilateral cease-fire and, therefore, the Armed Forces will not conduct military operations in the above-mentioned area.

This will in no way prevent the Army and police from maintaining order throughout Colombia, as they have been doing since I assumed the Presidency.

The relocation of the M-19 directorate and hundreds of M-19 guerrillas to a site they previously designated, along with the government, is an extraordinary event. It is of great importance, because the M-19 thereby reiterates its willingness for peace.

This peace initiative has a well-defined beginning and end. It began when the M-19 showed its willingness to achieve peace. This willingness was a prerequisite to begin direct talks with the government to reincorporate the guerrilla group into civilian life. The Armed Forces, who have always given valuable support to ensure compliance with the various aspects of the government's policy of reconciliation, have continued to fully perform their duties throughout the nation.

The peace initiative will end with the definite incorporation of the M-19 into civilian life. Obviously, the guerrilla group will have to put its weapons aside. It will also have to cast aside the possibility of threatening to resort to them in the future.

We must undergo a process toward this end. We must go through three stages. The M-19 has already been through the first stage, which was a stage of detente. This stage established an atmosphere of understanding, credibility, and confidence, so as to lead the government into holding direct talks with the M-19. And this is exactly what happened.

Two parallel yet independent dialogues were defined. One dialogue dealt with the guerrilla group's demobilization. The other dialogue dealt with the consolidation of a complete democracy. This latter issue will also be discussed with the political parties at a series of work sessions that we must conclude before the beginning of the next legislative period on 20 June. The work sessions will begin on 1 April. We hope that representatives from Colombia's social and political forces will participate in these sessions.

By relocating in Cauca Department, with the protection and consent of the authorities, the M-19 has entered the second stage in the peace initiative, which is a stage of transition. There is still a considerable way to go, but we must go down this road so the M-19 will incorporate permanently into democratic life, and so they will coexist peacefully and civilly with all Colombians.

There is no magic formula to help us along this path. But we have made great progress. The declaration signed today by the government minister, the presidential advisor for peace and rehabilitation, the Cauca Department governor, and the commander of the M-19 sets a deadline to end the entire process. This process must conclude before the next election debate.

I hope you all feel as satisfied as I do about the progress we have made thus far. I hope the decisions made today will be properly implemented so that we can reach the goals desired by everyone—the nation, the government, and the M-19. The government will continue supporting whatever actions may be necessary to achieve this goal.

A few days ago, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia [FARC], another guerrilla group, announced a unilateral cease-fire. We hope they honor this cease-fire long enough to demonstrate beyond a doubt that they, like the M-19, seriously desire reconciliation.

I encourage all armed groups to rejoin civilian life. The path before them is clear if they meet the minimum requirements. They can then participate in a process that has credibility and that will actually result in the achievement of peace. You may ask how and why we have obtained such positive results. The reason is that when I began my administration, my collaborators and I designed a strategy which included the so-called peace initiative and a dialogue with armed groups as one of its many elements.

This strategy was based on four central elements directly or indirectly related to public order: First, the expansion and modernization of Colombian democracy through such measures as a plan created by the government and opposition parties to provide more political openings for all political groups, large or small, no matter what their ideology. The rebels today have greater incentives to defend their ideas peacefully within a participative democracy. Second, the defense of the interests of the weak through plans to eradicate absolute poverty, to renovate the downtrodden areas, and to help the peasants and those people who have not benefitted from urban development by including them in government decisions. Third, and thanks to the Congress, very important agrarian and urban reforms were approved proving that important changes can be made without the use of violence. Lastly, an overall public order strategy was adopted that extends a steady hand and contributes to the strengthening of the state, especially the administration of justice and the presence of legal authority throughout the country.

Fellow countrymen: The government's strategy aimed at achieving a solid, stable, and lasting peace continues to result in definite progress. The extreme rightist and leftist rebels have not been able nor will they be able to stop the changes that are being made. Like you, I also see obstacles ahead. I know that they are big obstacles, but they are not insurmountable. We have successfully overcome some of these obstacles; some people believed that those obstacles were insurmountable. We will continue to handle problems as they arise, but will always progress along the right path, the path established in the plan for reforms approved during the 1986 elections by an overwhelming majority.

I once again invite the social and political forces throughout the country to redouble their support for the government's efforts. The government is building a new, peaceful, and more just Colombia for the good of all the Colombian people. I have faith in the Colombia of today and of the future because I will not allow problems to keep us from realizing our country's potential and from consolidating the great achievements we have made. We are experiencing another hour of hope in the promising future of our homeland. Good night, and thank you.

M-19 Commission To Distribute Peace Agreement

PA1903040189 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0155 GMT 19 Mar 89

[Text] M-19 [19 April Movement] Commander Carlos Pizarro Leongomez today gave final instructions to the 13 M-19 members who tomorrow will depart from the M-19's Santo Domingo camp in Cauca Department to travel throughout the country disseminating the peace agreement made with the government.

These followers of Carlos Pizarro Leongomez, who have no legal charges pending against them and who will be in charge of defending the peace process, began working today at the house in Santo Domingo that the rebels have prepared for leaders' meetings. It is here that they received instructions they will use in seeking support for the agreeements signed with the government.

[Begin Pizarro recording] The comrades will play an enormously important role for the M-19's future, for democracy's future in Colombia, and for the achievement of peace through peaceful activities and peaceful resolve. [end recording]

These M-19 members will have a permanent office, bodyguards, and official vehicles in Bogota so they can move about freely. They will leave Santo Domingo tomorrow with specific instructions from Pizarro and will inform the public of the agreement with the government with a view to obtaining the support of broad sectors of civilian society.

The visit by ranking M-19 members to this area the rebels call Peace Villa was quite an event. The celebration began last night and ended at dawn today. There was dancing in the town's streets and stores and the drinking was heavy. The party lasted so long that people slept on the floors of the 10 houses in the hamlet and in small plastic tents set up in the fields. Everyone celebrated the agreements, which are already in effect.

[Begin recording] [Reporter] Is the government pleased with the signing of this peace agreement?

[Government Minister Raul Orejuela] We view the agreement with hope, and the country should view it with great optimism. [end recording]

Rifles were cleaned today. Some rebels read newspapers, calmly awaiting the results of the peace process. They are calm because the government has guaranteed their safety by building military checkpoints throughout the entire area with armed men who are carefully watching civilian movement on the mountain range.

During this phase of the direct talks with the government, the M-19 staff will remain in the camp.

Meanwhile, congress will choose a means for pardoning the rebels who accept the peace process, President Virgilio Barco said today. The president said he imagines they will turn in their weapons to the Armed Forces.

[Begin recording] [Barco] I hope other rebel groups will understand that this is the proper path for returning to civilian life.

[Reporter] Mr President, the reintegration will be without weapons. Who will receive these weapons?

[Barco] I imagine the Armed Forces will receive them. [end recording]

Arms Surrender Not Included

PA1903053589 Paris AFP in Spanish 2335 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Bogota, 18 Mar (AFP)—Carlos Pizarro, the 19 April Movement [M-19] leader who on 17 March signed an agreement with the Colombian Government to return to normal civilian life, today warned that the agreement does not include the M-19 surrendering its weapons.

Pizarro said: "We talked of many things with the government, including demobilization procedures and protection so the guerrillas can participate more fully in the nation's normal life, but we did not discuss the surrendering of arms."

Pizarro talked with the private Radio Caracol network from Santo Domingo, where the M-19 set up camp with the approval of Virgilio Barco's liberal government and with Armed Forces protection, to facilitate the peace talks.

In this village in the mountains of Cauca, in the southwestern part of the country, which is now called "Peace Villa," Interior Minister Raul Orejuela and presidential peace adviser Rafael Pardo signed an agreement with the M-19 in which the two sides agreed to continue negotiations to find political opportunities for the M-19 members.

The signing of the document initiated the second phase (transition) of the government's peace plan presented by Barco in September 1988. The third phase, called return to democratic life, is pending.

This third phase should be completed prior to May 1990, according to statements made by President Barco last night in a speech broadcast on radio and television in which he praised the agreement signed at the Peace Villa.

For the government, the first phase of the peace process (detente) has been completed due to the "good will" and desire demonstrated by the M-19 through the cease-fire it declared months ago.

In reiterating that the M-19 is willing to demobilize as a rebel group and return to democratic life, Pizarro explained that "the surrendering of weapons was not discussed, and we will never discuss it."

Regarding the absence from the peace talks of the rebel groups connected with the so-called National Guerrilla Coordinating Board (CNG), the umbrella organization that includes the M-19, the leader of the M-19—the only guerrilla group that has so far pledged to seek a peaceful solution—said that the M-19 never intended to leave the other subversive organizations out of the peace process. He said that, on the contrary, efforts are being made to bring all the forces capable of making a contribution into the peace process.

'Strict Inspections' for Fruit Imports, Exports

PA1703145789 Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1215 GMT 17 Mar 89

[Text] Bogota—Colombian authorities have ordered strict inspections of all imported fruit, especially Chilean fruit, as well as of exported fruit. The Health Ministry and the Colombian Agricultural Institute ordered the inspection and testing for cyanide of a huge shipment of Chilean apples unloaded in Buenaventura.

The decision was made following the discovery of poison in Chilean grapes in the United States, after which the sale of Chilean fruit was suspended in the United States, Denmark, Japan, and other countries.

According to Colombian health officials, these steps were taken following anonymous threats by a mysterious ultra-right-wing Israeli group to poison Colombian and Brazilian fruit exports if the United States continues its talks with the PLO. Inspections of all export fruit, such as bananas, will be intensified as of today.

Senator Says Leftist Paramilitary Group Formed

PA1703135689 Buenos Aires REUTER in Spanish 1933 GMT 12 Mar 89

[Text] Bogota, 12 Mar (REUTER)—An opposition senator reported today that the first Colombian left-wing paramilitary group has been formed. The left-wing group will confront right-wing death squads in the country's northern region.

Social Conservative Party leader Alvaro Leyva said he received a letter announcing the formation of the "Uraba People's Militias" [Milicias Populares de Uraba], which will operate in the strife-torn Antioquia and Cordoba Departments. Leyva told reporters the new group is not linked to the existing guerrilla groups. The letter he received said the group is formed by civilians with the purpose of backing the guerrillas and fighting against right-wing paramilitary groups.

Former Government Minister Cesar Gaviria said 2 years ago that there were approximately 140 right-wing paramilitary groups in Colombia and that these groups are to blame for killing members or supporters of rebel and left-wing groups.

Leyva said the Uraba People's Militias claimed responsibility for violence in the Uraba banana region over the past weekend. This region, bordering Panama, is a hotbed of rebel and death squad activity.

The opposition senator, who proposed an unofficial peace plan recently accepted by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, said the new group will intensify the conflict. Leyva spoke during a program broadcast over a radio network in Sincelejos, where the Colombian opposition party is holding a convention.

This is the first time a left-wing paramilitary group has been formed in Colombia. According to official explanations, violence in this country is caused by guerrillas, death squads, drug traffickers, and common criminals.

Ecuador

Government Resumes Foreign Debt Payments

PA1803182989 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1733 GMT 18 Mar 89

[Text] Quito, 18 Mar (DPA)—After a 26-month moratorium made necessary by the worsening of the economic crisis, Ecuador announced today that it is resuming payment of interest on its foreign debt. The payments will cover a "large portion" of the debt and "will not cause domestic financial stress."

The resumption, according to a statement made today by Abelardo Pachano, president of the Monetary Board, has already been disclosed to the negotiating committee of creditor banks and will take place "in the next few weeks."

"This decision is the result of a recovery of the economy's external sector," Pachano said. He mentioned a number of statistics showing such a recovery.

Ecuador suspended payments on its $11.043-billion foreign debt in January 1987 after all economic indicators plunged during President Leon Febres Cordero's conservative regime.

"Ecuador is now in a position to pay a large portion of its foreign financial obligations," Pachano said. He met today with the ambassadors of creditor countries in Quito and announced the resumption of interest payments at the end of the 2-hour meeting.

Hours earlier, President Rodrigo Borja had said over a radio and television network: "We are emerging from the immense economic catastrophe we inherited." He added: "We have organized the economy in these 7 months."

In August 1988, when President Febres Cordero's term ended, Ecuador had a negative monetary reserve of $320 million, its fiscal deficit was equivalent to 17 percent of the GNP, and no foreign credit was available because the foreign debt was not being paid.

"We have drastically reduced the public sector deficit, the monetary reserve has recovered, the exchange market has finally stabilized, and we have been able to reopen credit lines," Borja said. He admitted, however, that "so far" success in controlling inflation has been "negligible."

The Social Democratic government had announced from the outset that it would pay the foreign debt "as soon as circumstances permit," in amounts that would not have a negative effect on domestic development needs.

"The situation now permits this," Pachano said today. He highlighted the resumption of foreign debt payments as "proof of the seriousness of our word and of our intention to find solutions in cooperation with our creditors."

Correction to Analyst Says Brady Plan 'Positive'

PA1903002889

The following correction pertains to the item headlined "Economic Analyst Terms Brady Plan 'Positive,'" published in the 17 March Latin American DAILY REPORT, page 53: page 53, column two, last paragraph, sentence three make read: ...in many cases, that Latin American countries are unwilling to accept. In that respect...(rewording)

Venezuela

Government Approves Foreign Debt Conversion Plan

PA1603050489 Caracas Venezolana de Television Canal 8 in Spanish 0000 GMT 16 Mar 89

[Text] The Council of Ministers today approved a decree whereby the public foreign debt can be converted into Venezuelan Government investments.

According to Finance Minister Eglee Iturbe de Blanco, the mechanism approved today at Miraflores Palace is not aimed at paying the foreign debt, but at allowing foreign as well as local investors to purchase the debt at rates lower than the current foreign rate and to use that debt for domestic investment projects. Thus, according to Iturbe, the decree will regulate Venezuelan investments. A commission will be established, composed of the finance and development ministers, the director of

the Venezuelan Investment Fund, and the president of the Central Bank, that will set the conditions under which the debt will be converted to investments in priority projects such as agricultural industry, low-cost housing, hotels, metalworking and metallurgic projects, among others.

A fund would be established so investors can accumulate their debt conversions to use them for the previously mentioned projects.

[Begin Iturbe recording] An auction mechanism has also been established whereby the country will state the amount of foreign debt it is willing to purchase. This will allow the government to get the highest discount rates, which it will then auction. Regulations for this process have not yet been completed. We would like to implement this mechanism because it will help distribute the discount between the investors and the state. [end recording]

The finance minister calculated that approximately $300 million will be brought into the country in the form of investments. Regarding the payment of income taxes, the finance minister said a 15-day extension will be granted, giving all taxpayers until 15 April to fulfill this duty.

This is a U.S. Government publication. Its contents in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the U.S. Government. Users of this publication may cite FBIS or JPRS provided they do so in a manner clearly identifying them as the secondary source.

Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) and Joint Publications Research Service (JPRS) publications contain political, economic, military, and sociological news, commentary, and other information, as well as scientific and technical data and reports. All information has been obtained from foreign radio and television broadcasts, news agency transmissions, newspapers, books, and periodicals. Items generally are processed from the first or best available source; it should not be inferred that they have been disseminated only in the medium, in the language, or to the area indicated. Items from foreign language sources are translated; those from English-language sources are transcribed, with personal and place names rendered in accordance with FBIS transliteration style.

Headlines, editorial reports, and material enclosed in brackets [ ] are supplied by FBIS/JPRS. Processing indicators such as [Text] or [Excerpts] in the first line of each item indicate how the information was processed from the original. Unfamiliar names rendered phonetically are enclosed in parentheses. Words or names preceded by a question mark and enclosed in parentheses were not clear from the original source but have been supplied as appropriate to the context. Other unattributed parenthetical notes within the body of an item originate with the source. Times within items are as given by the source. Passages in boldface or italics are as published.

SUBSCRIPTION/PROCUREMENT INFORMATION

The FBIS DAILY REPORT contains current news and information and is published Monday through Friday in eight volumes: China, East Europe, Soviet Union, East Asia, Near East & South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and West Europe. Supplements to the DAILY REPORTs may also be available periodically and will be distributed to regular DAILY REPORT subscribers. JPRS publications, which include approximately 50 regional, worldwide, and topical reports, generally contain less time-sensitive information and are published periodically.

Current DAILY REPORTs and JPRS publications are listed in *Government Reports Announcements* issued semimonthly by the National Technical Information Service (NTIS), 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, Virginia 22161 and the *Monthly Catalog of U.S. Government Publications* issued by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

The public may subscribe to either hardcover or microfiche versions of the DAILY REPORTs and JPRS publications through NTIS at the above address or by calling (703) 487-4630. Subscription rates will be provided by NTIS upon request. Subscriptions are available outside the United States from NTIS or appointed foreign dealers. New subscribers should expect a 30-day delay in receipt of the first issue.

U.S. Government offices may obtain subscriptions to the DAILY REPORTs or JPRS publications (hardcover or microfiche) at no charge through their sponsoring organizations. For additional information or assistance, call FBIS, (202) 338-6735,or write to P.O. Box 2604, Washington, D.C. 20013. Department of Defense consumers are required to submit requests through appropriate command validation channels to DIA, RTS-2C, Washington, D.C. 20301. (Telephone: (202) 373-3771, Autovon: 243-3771.)

Back issues or single copies of the DAILY REPORTs and JPRS publications are not available. Both the DAILY REPORTs and the JPRS publications are on file for public reference at the Library of Congress and at many Federal Depository Libraries. Reference copies may also be seen at many public and university libraries throughout the United States.